



FOOTBALL PITCH FEES GOING UP

Report by Andrew Turton

FOOTBALL pitch fees will rise for the second year in a row across Dudley borough – despite claims that almost half of the pitches are in a ‘poor’ state.

Teams currently pay around £518 a season to use council pitches and changing rooms but this is set to rise by two per cent under proposals.

An investigation last year found that only 97 out of 167 pitches were found to be average or good condition with 70 found to be ‘poor’.

Overhanging trees, worn out surfaces and outdated changing rooms are among the problems highlighted. Teams say the fee rise was expected but want more to be done to improve the condition of pitches. Last year council officials proposed putting up fees by 40 per cent but backed down following talks with teams over maintenance costs.

Dudley Council is backing £2 million plans for new all-weather pitches in the borough including at Hillcrest School in Netherton and The Dell Stadium, Pensnett.

Brian Sutton, a representative of the Dudley and Cradley Heath Football League, welcomed those plans but said traditional pitches also needed to be cared for.

Alternatives

“It is just the way it is at the moment that these things have to go up,” said Mr Sutton, who also sits on an advisory group to the council called Dudley Football Forum. “At least it isn’t the 40 per cent they said last year.

“Not much is done with the pitches. They cut them but they don’t rake them or put fertiliser on them regularly.”

Councillor Patrick Harley, who helps manage The Swan pub team which plays on Wordsley Park, said the council should be looking at alternatives for funding.

The opposition Conservative group leader added: “When we had control of the council we would be looking to bring in people that could cut the grass a lot cheaper than the council.”

Under plans, the cost will increase to £527.90 to hire the football pitch and changing rooms per season. The pitch and changing rooms hire on a casual basis will be £50.49 per match, up from £49.50. Junior football teams pay £182.90 for an up to nine-a-side pitch but will pay £186.56 under the planned increases.

A report to Councillor Hilary Bills, who oversees parks, said: “The council’s budget target requires on average a minimum increase in fees and charges of two per cent for 2016/17, however there are a number of services where, due to budget constraints, cost levels and market conditions, a higher rate than this is necessary.”



Councillor Patrick Harley

Clearing up of rubbish starts again

WORK has re-started clearing a huge rubbish pile next to homes in Brierley Hill – after the project was hit by delays due to a change in contractors.

Rubbish at one time towered at around 40ft at the Refuse Derived Fuel plant, in Moor Street, which led to a campaign from councillors and residents for a clean-up of the mountain of waste, which involved the Environment Agency.

Rubbish has been piled up at the site for more than six years leading to a court battle to have it removed. It was a saga that resulted in High Court action with company director Robert McNaughton jailed for failing to remove it in 2013.

Contractors originally moved on to the site at the end of January but work paused, to the frustration of residents. But it resumed last week after a change of contractors.

It has been revealed that proposals to build flats on the RDF site are likely to be resurrected once the rubbish is cleared. A scheme to build two modern blocks containing 94 flats was unveiled last year but stalled as a developer feared they might be landed with the clean-up bill.

More shops closing than are opening

STOURBRIDGE saw the biggest percentage rate of closures of multiple chain shops in the Black Country in 2015.

But across the region, as a whole, the rate of shops shutting slowed according to research for PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Birmingham, which saw the new Grand Central development open, bucked the trend of closures with an increase of 29 shops over the year.

But in Stourbridge there was a 5.32 per cent fall from 94 to 89 shops with 10 shops closing and five opening.

In Dudley there was a 2.86 per cent decline with six openings and nine closures and in Halesowen a 1.39 per cent decline with one opening and two closures.

Andy Lyon, partner and head of retail at PwC West Midlands, said: “The openings are concentrated on experience type outlets, especially food and beverage. The closures reflect ongoing structured changes in retail banking and the higher regulatory hurdles facing so called ‘money shops’. Fashion has taken another battering.”

Brave Dennis, 82, is king of the castle



‘I’ll give it a go’ – stroke survivor Dennis Tipper, aged 82, abseils down Dudley Castle walls in aid of the Stroke Association

Wonder wall effort

AN 82-year-old stroke survivor scaled the heights of Dudley Castle to raise money for charity – then said ‘I would get up there and do it again in a shot’.

Dennis Tipper, from Lye, came down 100ft off the castle walls to raise more than £300 for the Stroke Association.

Fundraisers gathered to see Mr Tipper take on the abseil along with his son-in-law Frank Cragge and friend Michelle O’Meara.

More than 30 people had abseiled the medieval walls of the popular attraction during the course of the event on Saturday.

Mr Tipper, who attends the Dudley Stroke Association group, said: “This is something that is incredibly

close to my heart after I suffered a stroke myself. To be able to be here today and to do this feels great.

“There is a group of us and we all meet and support each other and when I heard about the abseil I thought why not give it a go.”

Son-in-law Frank Cragge, aged 51, confessed before the taking the spiral staircase to the castle towers that he was petrified of heights.

He said: “Going over the edge at the top was the worst bit but once you’ve done that it feels amazing.”

Michelle O’Meara from Dudley, who works with the support group, said she was touched by Dennis’ story and felt the need to join in to help the work of the Stroke Association.

HOUSING

More than 120 new homes are planned

MORE than 120 homes will be built on the former Ridge Hill Hospital site in Wordsley after the plan won the backing of Dudley councillors.

A mix of houses and apartments will be built at the site on Brierley Hill Road, with 129 homes to be created in total.

Most of the empty buildings in the hospital grounds will be demolished.

The site has long been a target for developers keen to transform the site. Plans for homes at the site were first lodged in 2007. Neighbours have long called for the site to be cleaned up and brought back to use.

ACCIDENT

Binman is injured while on his round

A REFUSE collector has been injured after he was caught between his bin lorry and a car in Wordsley.

An ambulance was sent after the incident in Coldstream Drive at about 7.50am on Tuesday.

An ambulance service spokesman said: “When crews arrived they found a 53-year-old man who had suffered an arm injury after he was caught between the car and lorry as the car went by. He was taken to Russells Hall Hospital for further assessment and treatment.”

FIRE

Garage burns victim is taken to hospital

A MAN was taken to hospital with burns to his face and hands after a severe blaze at an MOT test centre in the Black Country.

Up to four cars were damaged by the intensity of the flames at the garage in Old Hill on Friday afternoon.

Around 20 firefighters were called to Bridge Street Service Station, in Garratts Lane at around 1.30pm.

Garratts Lane had to be closed between Powke Lane and Wrights Lane due to the severity of the fire.

Firefighters from Haden Cross, Oldbury and Brierley Hill were on scene for more than two hours.



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Instructor is to appeal sex conviction



Gary Rolinson - found guilty of sexual assaults

A DRIVING instructor who was found guilty of sexually assaulting six of his teenage pupils is planning to appeal against his conviction – after criticising his barrister’s conduct in his trial, a court heard.

Gary Rolinson has lodged an appeal with the Court of Appeal and his barrister Miss Samantha Forsyth, who defended him during his trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court, said she was no longer able to represent him.

The case had been adjourned for a pre-sentence report on Rolinson following his conviction for 13 offences of sexual

assault and one of causing a person to engage in sexual activity. Rolinson, who ran the 500+ Driving School in Kingswinford, preyed on young men by sexually assaulting them during lessons between 2012 and 2014, the jury heard.

He was first arrested in 2012 after a teenager made a complaint about Rolinson touching him inappropriately.

In 2014 there was a further complaint by another young man, so the police wrote to more than 700 people who had been taught by Rolinson. As a result other youths, aged 17 and 18 at the time of their lessons came forward.

Rolinson, aged 60, now of Mulberry Green, Dudley, had been due to be sentenced at Warwick Crown Court but Miss Forsyth said she did not feel able to mitigate for him.

She explained: “Mr Rolinson has shown me a bundle of documents he has submitted to the Court of Appeal Criminal Division.

“He has made quite serious allegations of professional impropriety in my conduct of the case and that of my instructing solicitor. I am in an invidious position.”

The case was adjourned to April 22.

4,000 jobs on the way at revived Waterfront

MORE than 4,000 jobs will be created at The Waterfront after the Chancellor George Osborne gave backing to revitalise the site.

Civic leaders say said the plans also hold the key to bringing the much-heralded Midland Metro extension to Brierley Hill.

Proposals to make The Waterfront and parts of neighbouring Harts Hill an enterprise zone were approved as part of the Chancellor’s budget last Wednesday.

Businesses moving in will be given a business rate free period for five years to tempt them to move to the complex near the Merry Hill shopping centre.

Long term aims also include creating 66,000 sq ft of business space to improve what is already on offer to potential tenants.

Earlier plans for a new enterprise zone at The Waterfront stalled after they were shelved in favour of sites around Darlaston and Wolverhampton’s 154 in 2011.

The Waterfront has been hit by problems in recent years after a series of high-profile business pulled out of the site. Currently around 40 per cent of the site is vacant.

During its heyday, The Waterfront was one of the borough’s prime locations with waterside bars and restaurants adding to the vibrant atmosphere.

Success

Dudley Council leader, Councillor Pete Lowe, said the creation of the new zone marked a major success for Dudley and the region.

“Its development, alongside the delivery of the Metro, will create jobs for people not only living locally but for those living across the whole of the West Midlands,” he said. “This announcement shows huge confidence in what we are trying to achieve in Dudley borough, which can now take a leading role in creating jobs for the future.”

Dudley councillor Khurshid Ahmed, the council’s economic development chief, added: “The delivery of new transport links and environmental improvements will help stimulate further investment. The enterprise zone at the Waterfront will also be complemented by plans for significant housing growth.”

Hotrod hotshots win engineering prize



From left, Ethan Dunbar Baker, Rogan McGilp and Stuart Chau with the hot rod they built for Rogan's brother David

THREE students from Stourbridge have claimed top prizes in a national science and engineering competition.

The Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineers Fair saw Ethan Dunbar Baker, aged 15, Rogan McGilp, 16, and Stuart Chau, 17, of Old Swinford Hospital school named Young Engineers of the Year for building a unique hot rod car from scratch for Rogan’s disabled 13-year-old brother David.

The judges applauded the Da-

vid’s Wheels project in which they built a hot rod with complete disability access within three months.

The judges also commended the team for coming together from different school years, driven by their shared passion for the project.

Rogan said: “Becoming UK Young Engineers is an amazing achievement for Ethan, Stuart and I. David’s Wheels is not just about building a car for my brother but we hope this will help change people’s perceptions about what’s pos-

sible for disabled people to do. My brother really loves the car we’ve built for him and hopefully we will inspire more people to make activities and entertainment more accessible to disabled children.”

More than 200 finalists from across the country were selected to show their ideas at the Big Bang Fair. Ten were then shortlisted to pitch to a panel of celebrity judges including astronaut Helen Sharman and TV astronomer Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock.

Network Rail work disruption over Easter

RAIL users are being warned of major disruption as the line between Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street closes for six days over Easter.

From tomorrow (Good Friday) until Wednesday, the line connecting the two cities will be closed due to work being undertaken by Network Rail on a key junction near Smethwick.

Four days of works are also taking place in Stafford to remove the last remaining bottleneck that causes delays on the West Coast Main Line.

During this time, London Midland trains will be significantly reduced and replacement bus services will be in use.

Martin Frobisher, route managing director for Network Rail, said: “The upgrade between Birmingham and Wolverhampton is essential to maintain a reliable infrastructure and involves a significant amount of work. It has been carefully planned to be completed as safely and quickly as possible.

“I appreciate there will be some disruption as a result of this work and I’d like to thank passengers for their patience while we carry out this investment to provide a better railway.”

The work is part of Network Rail’s £40 billion Railway Upgrade Plan.

On Good Friday, and the three days after, there will be half-hourly replacement bus service for local stations between Birmingham New Street and Wolverhampton.

Reduced direct train services will be provided by other operators such as Virgin Trains and CrossCountry.

New bus fleet for Ring and Ride

A WEST Midlands charity providing a discount bus service to people with limited mobility has launched a new fleet of vehicles.

Ring and Ride has launched seven new vehicles to benefit passengers living in the Black Country. They were unveiled at a ceremony held at the Black Country Living Museum last week.

Each bus has been named after some of the charity’s longest standing passengers, some have been using the door-to-door service for more than 30 years.

David Birmingham, chief executive for West Midlands Special Needs Transport, said: “This investment cements our commitment in continuing to provide our vital service to the people of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.”

Road rage incident, two arrests made

TWO men were arrested following an alleged road rage incident between Halesowen and Stourbridge.

A driver was punched and a window smashed as violence flared on the A456 Birmingham Road, near Hagley, at 8.45am Friday.

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Outcry at fatal road tragedy sentence

A JUDGE has been criticised for giving a 'lenient' sentence to a postman who killed a father-of-eight by driving into him, having apparently fallen asleep at the wheel.

Sajid Hussain, aged 36, was given a suspended jail sentence and a community order after pleading guilty to causing the death of David Hinton, from Halesowen, by careless driving. But a campaign has now been launched by friends of Mr Hinton who want the sentence reviewed.

Hussain was at the wheel of a Volkswagen Polo when it struck Mr Hinton, 47, who had been putting his young children into his green Peugeot 206 in Oakham Road, Dudley.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that Hussain 'must have dozed off' before the collision near to the junction with Tansley Hill Road on June 20 last year.

Judge James Burbidge gave him an eight-month jail term suspended for two years, 200 hours of unpaid work and a three year driving ban. Sentencing him, the judge said: "The damage you have done to the Hinton family is immeasurable."

Mark Scott, who has set up a petition, claims Hussain, of Blackacre Road, Dudley, should have been given a harsher sentence. The petition has already been signed by 1,100 but needs 100,000 to go to Parliament.

He said: "I would like to have the lenient sentence overturned and a proper sentence given to Sajid Hussain who killed a family man leaving a widow and eight young children."

It's a jam packed holiday fortnight

YOUNGSTERS can enjoy a jam-packed range of activities and family fun days with the Juniors at Museums club this Easter holiday.

Free family trails, where children can hunt for clues around the venues, will be available every day from March 25 to April 10 at the Red House Glass Cone, and from March 25 until April 9 at Dudley Museum and Art Gallery.

There is a free, drop-in, Sticky Saturday session on April 9 at Dudley Museum and at the Red House Glass Cone on April 16 with the chance to have a go at messy crafts. Sticky Saturday runs 1.30pm to 3.30pm at both venues.

For information about the range of activities visit www.dudley.gov.uk/see-and-do/museums

Rubbish cleared from woodland

RUBBISH has been cleared months after being dumped in woods at Dudley. Waste near Castle Mill Road was removed by Dudley Council, after Dudley North MP Ian Austin contacted them on behalf of nearby residents.

Solid Auto is taken over by larger rival



Mark Price, Solid Auto MD

A CAR parts group based in Halesowen has been bought by larger rival Andrew Page for an undisclosed sum.

Established in 1983, Solid Auto has 17,000 sq ft of warehousing and offices on the 43-acre Coombswood Business Park and is a leader in the Japanese and Korean car parts market.

Andrew Page, based in Leeds, said the deal was part of its growth strategy. In particular it would strengthen its sourcing capability in China and the Far East.

Andrew Page chairman Jim Sumner said: "Solid Auto has established a very good reputation as a specialist supplier

over the last three decades." Mark Price, managing director of Solid Auto, said: "I am confident there will be significant benefits across the group given our expertise in Far East sourcing and detailed understanding of the market. I believe there is a great cultural fit between Andrew Page and Solid Auto."

The move comes after Solid Auto had outlined ambitious growth plans for the year after becoming an authorised distributor for Denso products and introduced a range of ABS sensors under its Solid Ace brand.

The company has also been expand-

ing its ranges of filters, braking, transmission, cooling, electrical, engine and steering & suspension components, with new-to-range introductions set to intensify well into 2016.

Late last year Mr Price had said: "As a specialist, we maintain the heritage and expertise that makes us relevant to a customer's business. We stock a lot of products within a niche range and there's still massive potential for our business. We've a reputation on sourcing hard to find parts and our expertise in Japanese and Korean vehicles is well renowned - we won't lose this specialism."

Campaign for double yellow lines on road

A CAMPAIGN for double yellow lines to be installed on a one-way Halesowen road has stepped up a gear after a councillor claimed residents are 'living in fear'.

Several smashes and claims of speeding cars in Church Street have left residents worried that a major accident will happen in the terrace road, which is made worse by a tight junction leading into Nimnings Road, said Councillor Karen Shakespeare.

Dudley traffic officers were called to the spot last week but insist that action cannot be taken for at least a year due to the junction only scoring 22 points on its danger rating system.

Angry Councillor Shakespeare said she was 'disgusted' by the council response.

"The road is narrow and tight and the one end has a one-way system from Long Lane and the other is two-way from Nimnings Road and that is where we have been pushing for the double yellow lines," she explained.

"Even after having officers to the spot it seems they are not interested, so the problem just continues. "Residents have had enough. They are living in fear of a fatal smash happening due to inconsiderate parking and speeding.

Unsafe

Traffic calming measures have been requested due to residents feeling unsafe when getting out of their cars.

Councillor Shakespeare continued: "Church Street has been subject to speeding cars and several cars being smashed into.

"It has left people fearing for their safety, especially if they have children or are elderly.

"Officers said that it would need to score 25 points on its rating system to be considered for double yellow lines for the 2016/17 programme, so now we will have to wait until 2017/18 for a decision to be made. It is a joke.

"There is no deterrent to get people to slow down or to note where they park."

She added: "There was another accident just a few days ago, so I will continue to fight for something to be done, as this is unacceptable."

A one-way system was installed on Church Street in 2010.

At the same time, Green Lane, which is the next road, has had thousands spent on measures to improve safety, including bollards and new signs.



Coseley's Niki Jones with dachshund puppy Bindi, who has deformed feet and needs a pioneering operation so she can walk like other dogs

Bionic dog bid to help fix Bindi

IT'S a dog's life for Bindi the dachshund. The pampered pooch looks down at her canine comrades from the vantage point of her own pram on trips to the park.

But the unlucky puppy has had it tough. Born with a condition that leaves her barely able to walk, the six-month-old could soon become the Black Country's own bionic dog thanks to a pioneering operation.

Devoted owner Niki Jones is determined to give her the best life possible by raising £7,500 to give her a bionic paw. "I just want to give her the best quality of life," says Niki, 41, from Coseley.

Niki helps run a group for devoted dog fans who share her passion for dachshunds.

When she saw her pet Pepper had given birth to a tiny puppy, she soon realised something was wrong. Bindi, a miniature smooth haired dachshund, had defects to both her front paws.

Niki, who runs a computer sales and repairs business with her husband, has found a pioneering vet who can amputate the worst paw and replace it with a bionic one. See www.go.fundme.com/bionicbindi

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tickets for charity show now on sale

TICKETS for a charity show hosted by the Mayor of Dudley are on sale.

Acts already lined up for the event in May include are Louise Roberts, Phil Arron, Emily Jones, Richie Ray, Jonathan Jones and Bubble.

Money raised on the night will be shared between Mayor Councillor Steve Waltho's five charities.

The event will be held at Parkes Hall Social Club in Parkes Hall Road, Dudley, on Friday, May 13. The show starts at 7pm and tickets cost £4, available from the club or 07412 531924.

Patrols stepped up over bike menace

YOBS have been causing a nuisance by riding off-road bikes around the Fens Pool Nature Reserve, leading to complaints.

Police said officers had seized one bike and two other youths had been warned about riding around at the beauty spot in Pensnett.

They said the area near Blackwater Close was a particular hotspot, while the bikes have also been seen on roads around Fens Pool.

Officers have stepped up patrols following complaints from people who live nearby.

First properties to go on market

THE first homes on a new housing development in Rowley Regis will soon be released for sale

Redrow has permission to build on the former St Michael's Business and Enterprise College site on Throne Road. Rowley Grange will include 111 three and four-bedroom homes.

Redrown spokeswoman Pauline Turnbull said: "We'll soon be releasing the first properties for sale off-plan with fully furnished show homes to open in a couple of months' time."

Happy singing sessions offered to youngsters

CHILDREN can find their voice by taking part in singing sessions this Easter.

Primary school music co-ordinator Margaret Jones is running the class on March 30 at Hasbury Christian Fellowship, in Albert Road, Halesowen.

Youngsters can learn songs from the movies, including Happy and Somewhere Over The Rainbow. The day starts at 10am and ends with a performance at 3pm. Email shenstonemusie@gmail.com, or call 07761849332.

Get out on the floor

AN evening of Northern Soul music is being offered at Dudley Town Hall on April 16.

Tickets for the event are £7 from the box office on (01384) 812812.

The music runs from 8pm to 1am with DJs including Hitsville Chalky, Martin Stanford and Ginger Taylor.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



AUNTIE Beeb says the Top Gear stunt, with a wheel-spinning Mustang clouding the Cenotaph in tyre smoke, will not be broadcast. Well, of course not. It has served its purpose. It has proved the old adage that there's no such thing as bad publicity.

ASK a silly question, get a silly answer. The form for a US visa asks: "Do you seek to engage in or have you ever engaged in terrorist activities, espionage, sabotage or genocide?" John McGarry, a blameless retired cop from Lancashire, says his travel agent mistakenly ticked the box. As a result Mr McGarry was marched off the cruise ship when it docked in New York and was questioned by police, an experience which he says ruined the trip.

MORE things misheard in youth. A former cookery teacher recalls the pupil who thought she was using self-erasing flour.



THE Archbishop of Canterbury says it is not racist to worry about mass immigration, and he makes the headlines. Yet while it is moderately interesting to hear an archbishop admit migration can bring problems, it is far more interesting to hear a migrant saying the same. Keith Vaz, the Labour MP who came to the UK with his family in 1965, says the system for resettling asylum seekers is unfair. The usual line from the Left is that immigration, diversity and multiculturalism are wholly beneficial, and the more the merrier. The Left love to use words such as "cultural enrichment" and "vibrant" and try to pretend it's a joyous thing to have lots of non English-speaking surgeons, and schools where 50 languages are spoken. But Vaz says: "The dispersal system appears unfair, with whole swathes of the country never receiving a single asylum seeker." In other words, the inner-cities have had enough, time to share the vibrancy around.

BETTER late than never. The Private Eye reports the curious fact that a director of Volkswagen, the car maker accused of falsifying diesel emissions, is called Olaf Lies – as reported in this column last October.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Rapid rise in number of students expelled

THE number of children expelled from Dudley secondary schools has risen by 75 per cent over a three year period.

Nearly half of the 89 students kicked out in 2014/15 were excluded because of persistent disruptive behaviour. Council chiefs labelled the numbers as 'a very rapid rise'.

In the 2012/2013 school year 51 pupils were permanently excluded across Key Stage 4 with that figure leaping to 89 for 2014/2015, an increase of 75 per cent. In 2013/2014 75 children were expelled.

By Clare Butler

The highest increase came from Year 10 pupils with 11 expelled in 2012/2013 rising to 28 in 2014/2015. A total of 24 were excluded in 2013/2014.

Councillor David Vickers, of the People Services Scrutiny Committee, said: "We need to do some hard work. I am disappointed with the figures that this report shows."

Reduce

Councillor Ian Cooper, cabinet member for children's services, said: "The education authority is working with all schools to try to reduce the need for permanent exclusions and this proactive approach has already seen a much lower rate of permanent exclusions in the current academic year, to a level which is already less than a half of what it was at the same point last year."

"The level of permanent exclusions from primary schools is below the regional average for the West Midlands."

Data also revealed that six schools have expelled 15 or more pupils with three schools excluding 21 or more. But bosses stated there was an 'enormous variation' between schools.

The School Standards Report 2015 stated: "The raw numbers of exclusions, at 74 for the year 2013-14, is higher than all other local authorities except Birmingham and Staffordshire. Both are much larger authorities. "As a proportion of the school population, the rate of permanent exclusion is more than twice as high as most of our closest geographical neighbours."

"These figure hide an enormous variation between schools. One school has only permanently excluded one student, and another only two, during the last three years six schools have permanently excluded 15 or more during that period, with three schools excluding 21 or more."

Pupil chose care home name



Head Joanna Turner, Christian and Janette Beckett, of BCFG

SCHOOL pupils have been working with a housing group to name a new state-of-the-art residential care home which is under construction in Halesowen.

The 66-bed three-storey care complex in Kent Road will open in September, replacing the former 1960s Shenstone Care Home demolished last year.

Now it has been revealed that the £5 million build will be called Gower Gardens, a reference to Gower Farm which used to occupy a site nearby.

Lapal Primary School pupil Christian, from Year 4, came up with the winning name and was congratulated by head teacher Joanna Turner.

Janette Beckett, director of care and social business at Black Country Housing Group, who are behind the build, said: "We were delighted to welcome Christian and his family to site to help us unveil the new name for our new facility, Gower Gardens. We hope that when the home opens later in 2016 it will be a real part of the community and, with this ambition, it was important for us to involve our community in deciding on the property's name"

Made in Britain bus fleet launched

NATIONAL Express is buying more environmentally-friendly buses to cover the Black Country.

The public transport company, which runs bus services and operates the Midland Metro in the West Midlands, is expanding its fleet of high-tech grey-painted Platinum buses. This follows their successful introduction on routes in May last year.

National Express is spending £15 million to buy 65 more this year with the first expected to be on the road in the summer.

Platinum buses currently operate on eight routes across Birmingham, Solihull, Coventry and Walsall.

The £34m fleet of 58 buses give passengers free wifi, extra leg room and high-backed comfy seats.

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The buses currently operate on the 900, 957, X51, 997, 934, 935, 936 and 937 routes.

A recent survey showed passengers are impressed with the new vehicles with satisfaction across all the Platinum routes 94 per cent and 81 per cent found the services good value for money.

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Wildlife-friendly gardens hope after lottery funding

A NEW project aiming to create more wildlife-friendly gardens across Sandwell is being launched thanks to lottery funding. Officials at RSPB centre in Sandwell Valley secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to towards the scheme.

The project is the latest boost for the reserve following the opening of its new visitor centre, off Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr. The Give Sandwell Nature A Home project has been established to enhance wildlife in and around towns in a bid to boost quality of life.

Warning on cold calling rogue traders

SANDWELL Council Trading Standards are warning residents to be aware of rogue traders 'cold' calling in the Sandwell area following a number of reported incidents in the Great Barr and Hamstead area.

Officers are concerned about potentially illegal practices including false representations, unreasonable charges, unfinished poor quality work and aggressive practices.

Mark Beesley, Area Trading Standards Officer, said: "With the weather improving, we see an increase in rogue trader activity particularly around works to driveways, gardens and roofs. Recent reports suggest that these rogue traders are using intimidating and aggressive behaviour in trying to persuade residents to agree to work. I urge residents to keep a particular eye on their older and vulnerable neighbours who may be having work done. Report suspicious activity or seek advice by phoning 0345 404 0506."

The initiative will help transform green spaces that are perfect for wildlife and to 'extend' the size of the RSPB Sandwell Valley reserve.

The team is asking residents to get involved and help wildlife by creating bug hotels, nest boxes, and wildflower patches to house creatures.

People are being invited to the centre on Easter Monday between 11am and 3pm for inspiration at the Give Sandwell Nature A Home launch.

Challenge

Staff and volunteers are working on creating some wildlife demonstrations at the reserve and are encouraging visitors to take up the challenge of making their own garden a home for nature.

Alex Sharrod, Visitor Experience Officer at RSPB Sandwell Valley, said: "We're so excited to be getting this community project under way. Whether you grow an entire wildflower meadow or make a frog pond from an old washing up tub, it's wonderful to be able to create a home for nature."

There will be mini projects to take part in and demonstrations.

For details on any upcoming events email alex.sharrod@rspb.org.uk or call Nature's Reach on 0121 357 7395. Visitors have flocked to the £400,000 centre since it opened last August.

Lightwoods memories shared at event



Visitors from Cheltenham, from left, Dr Ivor Hadley, Jean and John Ripley, look through photographs

FOND memories and photos of Lightwood House and Park have been shared by Sandwell residents as part of its £5.2m restoration project.

The site is bustling with activity once again as company HB&C restarted work back in October, after the original contractor went into administration - putting the future of the scheme in doubt.

But the project aims to bring the Grade II listed house - built in 1791 - back into public use for community meetings, training and functions, a

children's centre and on-site offices for the park and house management.

Around 70 people shared stories and favourite pastimes at the Heritage Centre in Victoria Park, in what was deemed a 'great success' by archivist Miriam Norii, who helped plan the day with Julia Morris, Lightwoods Park community engagement officer and The Friends of Lightwoods Park and House volunteers.

Miriam said: "Pictures were brought in from as early as the 1930's, showing how much the park has changed,

with the iconic features such as the bandstand and drinking fountains. It was a lovely day, people of all ages and backgrounds came to share stories and their favourite memories of the park."

"Plans will see the park fully reopened from Spring 2017 at the earliest, aiming to transform this much loved historic park back into an attractive and welcoming place that people enjoy coming to." On the first floor there will be rooms for the community, conferences and weddings with the upper floor commercial office space.

Expansion at temple site gets go-ahead

EXPANSION plans for a temple in the Black Country have been approved by council planners.

Proposals for the 21-acre Balaji Temple complex in Tividale will see a 15-metre tall building constructed to house a festival chariot and the laying out of a processional route around the site off Dudley Road East.

John Baker, development and regulatory services manager at Sandwell Council, said: "This is an interesting application. There have been extensive legal advisories and discussions but the proposed changes do not compromise the proposed right of way across the site."

The temple has grown in the past 15 years to become the largest Hindu temple of its kind in Europe. Temple trustee Dr Venkataramana Rao said the scheme would ensure the temple was better equipped to host some of the key festivals.

Dr Rao said: "At the moment we can't keep the chariot anywhere outside because it's made of wood, that's why we need to build this new building. It's part and parcel of the Hindu community."

Plans were approved subject to the proposed finished floor levels of the processional route being submitted to and agreed by Sandwell Council. The decision was made at the council's planning committee last week.

Driver who had road ban is put behind bars

A 20-YEAR-OLD man has been sent to a young offenders' institute for 16 weeks after being caught driving while disqualified.

Reece Jones was spotted driving a blue mini on Wednesday Oak Road in Tipton and on the nearby Asda car park on December 3. He also had no insurance. Jones, of no fixed address, pleaded guilty to driving while disqualified and with no insurance at Sandwell Magistrates Court.

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FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL

IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



It's wheely not on to keep up criticism

BLACK Country MP Ian Austin has challenged critics of the giant ferris wheel in Dudley town centre, including Good Morning Britain presenter Piers Morgan, to put their prejudices to one side, and give the DY Eye a try.

A noble sentiment, but I think it might be an idea if Piers decides to sit this one out. Yes the wheel is 135ft tall, and made from some pretty sturdy looking beams, but would you trust it to carry Morgan's weight?

It's big. But not big enough for Morgan's ego!

□ □ □

WHILE I would never take it upon myself to defend Morgan, you can hardly blame the national media for jumping on the Dudley-bashing bandwagon when there are so many people in the town who seem so keen to put the boot in themselves.

It was after all, not the national media, but 21-year-old Dudley student Vincent Parry who branded it the worst tourist attraction in Britain. And it was not the national media which branded Dudley a "s***hole", but another delightfully articulated son of the town.

What is it with these people?

It was the same when the Art Deco shoe shop at the top of the town was renovated with a small European grant. People were queuing up to say it was not worth bothering to spend any money on Dudley.

Then there is the delightful Caitlin Moran. Now a fully paid-up member of the London metropolitan elite, she never tires of painting the people of Wolverhampton, where she grew up, as a bunch of reactionary Neanderthal layabouts.

Let's be honest, there is plenty to criticise about both Dudley and Wolverhampton, and regular readers of this column will know that I have few reservations about pointing out these shortcomings on a regular basis. But while I might bemoan the dearth of major retailers in Dudley, or local government's belief that block-paving is the panacea for the decline of the high street, I certainly don't criticise anybody for trying.

Why would anybody object to a ferris wheel? Or a shop being renovated?

Yes there is a lot wrong with our towns. But unlike some people, I would actually like to see them get better.

□ □ □

BESIDES, it is worth taking a trip to see the giant wheel if only to marvel at the workmanship that has gone into it. Just look at those huge girders, the massive bearings, stare in awe at how the powerful engines lift people into the sky.

And then weep at how, little more than a generation ago, we used to make all these incredible structures here in the heart of the Black Country. Where now we have leisure parks and out-of-town shopping centres.



Orkambi, drug that transformed Carly's life and may help others



Carly has been undergoing treatment since she was a child



Carly Jeavons meets Chancellor George Osborne in Whitehall

Trial drugs turned Carly's life around

Carly Jeavons says a trial drug has given her back her life, **PETER MADELEY** hears she wants others to benefit as well

STRUGGLING to breathe and suffering from crippling pains and exhaustion, Carly Jeavons was faced with the daunting possibility of losing her home.

Having being diagnosed with cystic fibrosis (CF) at three days old, she had long been used to an exhausting daily routine of medication and exercise.

As a youngster she had a vasoprost surgically implanted in her chest, which helps medics intravenously administer medication without constant injections, then at the age of 17 she was diagnosed with CF-related diabetes.

Each day, Carly had to take 90 tablets and put herself through a gruelling two-hour stint of physiotherapy just so she could lead anything resembling a 'normal' life.

Deteriorate

But in October 2011 the mother-of-one's health started to deteriorate when she started to work following the birth of her son, Corey.

"I was completely exhausted all the time and my body couldn't cope," said Carly, from Woodsetton, Dudley. "I started to need more regular, unplanned IVs - which had to take place in hospital as I didn't have the strength to do them myself at home."

"At one point I had to take three months off work due to the numerous IVs, oral antibiotics and steroids I had taken, but nothing made any difference."

Carly says she tried a number of new drugs, all of which had 'terrible side effects'. Then a new IV programme led to an allergic reaction, while she began to suffer with a seemingly permanent chest infection. Her lung function was down to 44 per cent.

"My options were running out," she said.



Carly Jeavons, who has CF, pictured with her son Corey, 5, at home in Woodsetton, Dudley

"The chest infection meant my joints had become so inflamed that I couldn't lift my arms or legs and my mom or fiancée would have to physically get me out of bed and dress me."

"It got to the point where I couldn't make it downstairs at all. I was having stomach blockages, my diabetes was getting more difficult to control and daily activities that were once normal were becoming increasingly difficult."

"I would get up wishing the day away because I couldn't wait to go back to bed at night. I couldn't plan anything because I never knew whether I would feel up to it. And if I did, I had to plan the next few days after so I could recover. Small luxuries such as going for a meal with friends became impossible."

Carly says she reached her lowest ebb. Her mental health began to deteriorate as she realised she was struggling to cope with life.

She started to face up to the very real possibility she was no longer capable of holding down her job.

"That would have meant losing my home," Carly said. "I always managed to maintain a normal life, always worked hard and both my partner and I provided a lovely home and life for our family. But I feared was all about to change."

Just when all seemed lost a glimmer of hope appeared. During a stint as an inpatient at the CF Centre in Dudley, she was told about a new drug called Orkambi that was being put through clinical trials.

The drug - a combination of two treatments - had been developed to thin the thick mucus that builds up on the lungs as a result of CF.

Just five places were available on the trial, but following a test Carly was accepted. "People might think it was a risk getting

involved in a trial," said Carly, aged 29. "But I never gave it a second thought. I was desperate. By that stage I would have done anything to feel better."

For the first six months of the trial Carly said she didn't know whether she was on the active drug or a placebo. Then in March 2014 she was rolled onto a second phase of treatment where she was given the active drug. Within weeks her life had been transformed.

Her demanding physio routine halved, her lung function increased and the chronic pain in her joints subsided, meaning she was able to regularly go to work.

The number of chest infections dramatically decreased, while the strength she regained allowed her to administer her IV antibiotics at home. She no longer required regular visits to hospital and was able to exercise again.

"Right now I am in the best health I have ever been in," Carly said. "I can be a working mom without being exhausted, something I would not have thought possible."

Relief

"The biggest relief is I don't worry like I did before. I still get poorly but I recover much better than I used to. The treatment has taken a massive weight off my shoulders."

Boosted by her own success with Orkambi, Carly now campaigns on behalf of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust calling for the NHS to extend clinical trials.

Her story prompted a House of Commons debate after her cause was taken up by Dudley North MP Ian Austin. Last week she took the fight to Downing Street where she handed in a 15,000-signature petition and received the backing of Chancellor George Osborne.

Carly said: "Cystic fibrosis care has long been about managing decline, instead of fighting the condition at the source. But thanks to new treatments people living with cystic fibrosis will have the opportunity to experience real changes in how they manage their condition."

The Cystic Fibrosis Trust has published an open letter to Vertex Pharmaceuticals, the manufacturer of Orkambi, urging it to work with the NHS towards a solution.

It is estimated that 50 per cent of the 9,000 CF sufferers in the UK could benefit from Orkambi.

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Continuity the key to tackling scandal of child exploitation

WHAT with the continued cuts in public services it makes you wonder just how Dudley Council leaders can justify paying an Interim Head of Children's Services a salary of £800 a day. If Merlin Joseph is competent enough to do the job why not offer her the post?

Perhaps it would end the uncertainty and ensure some continuity over a department tackling the scandal of child exploitation on our streets.

For far too long the groomers have had

Nickname really not a matter for MP

IAN Austin's criticism of the Washington American football team using the nickname 'Redskins' is a little silly.

Sports teams through the ages have been given names by fans or club owners. Names may have originated decades ago, when there was no negative inference intended.

While 'Washington Native Americans' may be more acceptable now, it doesn't exactly roll off the tongue.

If Mr Austin feels so strongly, why has he not raised the issue of the Exeter 'Chiefs' rugby side before?

Sports teams' nicknames transcend meaning - they just are!

I think Mr Austin is guilty of talking a load of Northampton Town and should concentrate on being a good MP for Dudley.

D STEELE
Wolverhampton

a free run, leaving vulnerable girls isolated with no one to turn to. Shamefully, in the past local authorities, police and other child protection agencies have been reluctant to intervene for fear of racial stereotyping, which could lead to accusations of racism.

DMBC tell us they have a campaign in place to combat this type of exploitation, but it could be too late for many of these young girls.

A P CUFF
Stourbridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letters should be brief and **MUST** include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Already ample parking space, so cut the fees

DUDLEY Council said that it was severely short of money and would have to make cuts. Then last week they said that they were going to spend several millions on building a multi-storey car park in Tower Street. Between King Street and Duncan Edwards Way there are the acres of the Flood Street car parks, almost the same distance from the town centre as Tower Street, accessible via a foot bridge. To aid usage, couldn't the council reduce the parking fees?

P COLE
Kingswinford

Great view from the wheel of our soon to close museum

WHAT a superb view you can get from Dudley's new (second hand?) ferris wheel, the most interesting feature being the soon-to-be-closed museum.

Can't the councillors of Dudley see the irony in promoting a short term vacuous ride over this well run little gem? Is it too difficult to see the town needs sustainable improvements to the leisure and shopping experience not short term 'entertainments'?

D BAILEY
Tividale

Bandwidth bandit fear

THE report of the lady who had been accused of illegally downloading a film (Dudley Chronicle, March 17) has a serious side to it.

Her details were traced from her IP address, therefore it is likely that someone has used her internet connection to download the film, this should not be possible if it has a security code.

However, we had a charge for use at a time when we were not home to use the computer.

BT were unable to explain why to us but our internet had been used by someone, probably to download films, which we never do.

So beware, there are people out there who are clever enough to steal your internet access.

R GWILLIAMS
Brierley Hill

What is fate of our gold?

MANY years ago I voted like many others to join the Common Market. I emphasise the Common Market, not Europe.

Has anyone considered what would happen to Europe should we withdraw?

England and Germany are the two largest contributors to the union. There are far more recipients than contributors. How would the rest of the EU cope with the loss of such funding?

I have one more question - what will happen to the load of gold that was transported from the Bank of England to the Bundesbank, Germany, as reserve for the Common Market. Will that be returned?

P BIRKS
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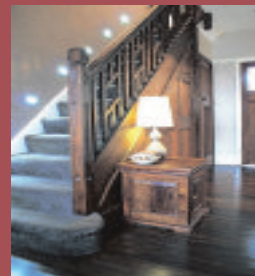
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Police issue warning on 'hugger muggers'

SHOWERING their victim with praise as they thank her for directions, this is the moment thieves steal a woman's jewellery in a sneak theft by the side of a road in West Bromwich.

These 'hugger muggers' are caught on camera tricking their victim in a broad daylight roadside ruse - before stealing jewellery from her.

Police have now issued a warning over the 'cunning' tricksters.

The victim, with her back to the camera, is stopped in Portobello Road when two women get out of a blue Ford Focus and begin to ask her for directions to Queen Elizabeth hospital.

The car drives away and the pair enthusiastically thank her for her help, before putting necklaces and bracelets around her neck and wrists and hugging her. But shockingly, as they do so, they unclasp her own necklace and bracelet without her knowledge.

Overfriendly

Two men inside the car then return to the scene and collect the women, heading off towards Tame Street, while another man comes to the victim's aid.

The incident happened around 3.15pm on Tuesday March 8, but is a similar report of a theft this week, which saw a 78-year-old woman mugged in Bearwood on Wednesday morning.

Police Constable Hannah Meredith, from Sandwell Police, said: "These people are very cunning in the way they operate and we would urge people to be wary about anyone who is overfriendly in these type of circumstances. They use sleight of hand and will check pockets without the victim knowing."



A CCTV image of the incident which saw a woman's jewellery being stolen

"The car, although not uncommon, does have hubcaps missing which makes it slightly distinctive and unfortunately does not have a registered keeper, so I would ask anyone with information on the car to contact us. The registration number displayed was W595 NUY."

On Wednesday in Bearwood a grandmother was walking down Wigorn Road around 11am to a convenience store when she was approached in exactly the same fashion, a car pulling alongside her with two women getting out and asking for directions to the nearest hospital, whilst thanking her and placing beads on her neck.

Granddaughter Viki Barnett, aged 25, said: "Something like this has never happened to my grandmother before, and to say the least it has shaken her up terribly."

"She broke down in tears, it's a terrible thing to happen to such a lovely lady. Stealing her necklace hurt more than anything as it was a present from my grandfather, who's sadly not with us but would have been celebrating his 90th birthday this week, so it has priceless sentimental value."

PC Meredith can be contacted on 101 or alternatively information can be given anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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COMPETITION

Get pizza the action at this refurb eaterie

PizzaExpress is celebrating the launch of its exciting new-look restaurant in Stourbridge by offering 10 fabulous prizes of a meal for two to the value of £40.

Located in a distinctive listed building in the heart of Stourbridge, the restaurant has been totally transformed and includes new artwork reflecting the building's former use as an upmarket tea room.

Each PizzaExpress restaurant is individually designed – often using well-known places, people or historical events from the area as the basis. During the 1960s, the Stourbridge building was known as Cranage's Tea Rooms and Royal Turf Lounge Bar.

Drawing inspiration from this, the artwork shows cakes, bread and other items sold at there. Today, though,

it is tasty pizzas as well as delightful desserts on the menu.

Manager, Louise Kitson, said, "We love our restaurant's new look and have a friendly and enthusiastic team who are looking forward to welcoming everyone over a delicious pizza."

PizzaExpress has been dishing up fresh, handmade pizza to Stourbridge since 1999. This spring sees the launch of new specials including, for the first time in PizzaExpress' 51-year history, a Hawaiian pizza, as well as the first-ever gluten-free dough balls and a refreshed Leggera Superfood Salad which comes in under 500 calories.

For younger pizza-lovers, PizzaExpress' Piccolo menu is full of tasty choices including 'Create Your Own' pizza, and starts at just £3.95.



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What is the address of this PizzaExpress?

Send answer on postcard with name, address and contact number to PizzaExpress Competition, Chronicles (Editorial) 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: March 31. Gift cards only valid at Stourbridge restaurant.

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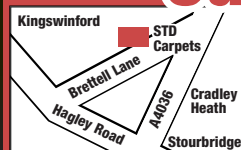
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Afternoon tea a royal celebration

West Mids Federation

WEST Midlands Federation of Townswomen's Guild will be hosting several events for all guild members throughout the coming year. The first event will be an afternoon tea to celebrate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This will be held in Wollaston Village Hall on Thursday, May 19.

The annual inter guild general knowledge quiz will be held on Monday, June 6 at Stourbridge Football Club, Amblecote.

Guilds are requested to select teams of four members to take part and may enter more than one team.

All members of the Federation Committee will be attending the National AGM being held in Bournemouth on Tuesday, June 28. There is a "Music Night" to be held on the previous evening which the committee will be attending.

The annual lunch will be held at the Vesuvio restaurant, Victoria Passage, Stourbridge on Monday July 25. All members are invited to attend.

Further details of events for the second half of 2016 will be announced later.

Whale of a time with talk on film director



The Bride of Frankenstein, directed by James Whale



Film director Whale

URSULA McInnes welcomed everyone to the February meeting. The speakers for the evening were from The Well, Wolverhampton's Food Bank, which is situated in a small unit on the Stafford Road but was previously at The Boot Factory, All Saints.

It is run by volunteers and fundraising depends on donations. Families in need are referred by social workers and depending on the size of the family, they are given a food pack to last for three days. Children are able to have a breakfast at school using cereals supplied by Kellogg's. Guild members donated a load of tins and cereals.

The Gardening Group went to Himley Park for a walk and to see the snowdrops.

Craig Denston was the speaker for Social Studies evening and his subject was From Kates Hill to California - The story of James Whale, father of Frankenstein.

James was born in Dudley and when he

Penn Townswomen's Guild

finished school in 1910, he enrolled at Dudley School of Arts & Crafts studying photography as an evening student. His day job was at Beans Industries making copper fenders. By July 1916 he had enlisted and became a Commissioned Officer losing his Black Country accent in the process.

In September 1917 he was taken prisoner but then after the war he started acting in small parts at the Old Rep. moving to Universal Pictures in Hollywood and directing films on Frankenstein. It was most interesting talk about someone who 'made good' from the Black Country.

Meetings are held at Penn United Community Hall, Penn Road at 7.15pm. New members and visitors are welcome.

Speaker leaves members in a flutter

Clent Gardening Club

cies of butterflies and 600 species of moths to be found in the UK.

The chairman thanked Patrick for an entertaining and informative talk. He reminded members of the next meeting on April 1. Adam Greathead

will give a talk on "Duck Ponds - A Garden Divided".

Meetings are held at Clent Village Hall. Visit <https://clentgardeningclub.wordpress.com> or call chairman Martin Grange on 01562 883009.

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The Farley Clock Tower at Carters Green, West Bromwich, in 1952. It was put up in 1897



Reuben Farley in his civic robes and with his chain of office



Farley's Fountain after it was returned to West Bromwich High Street in April 1979

Reuben Farley – who put people first and the welfare of his town

IF Bradford had Titus Salt, Manchester had its John Bright, and Birmingham had its Joseph Chamberlain, then West Bromwich was fortunate to have Reuben Farley.

Many leading Black Country manufacturers and businessmen threw themselves into municipal activities and they included notable names like Joseph William Sankey of Bilston, the Hingleys of Netherton and Dudley, the Chances of Smethwick, the Manders of Wolverhampton, and the Owens of Darlaston – but without doubt Farley was one of the most outstanding amongst such men.

An Anglican, he was as committed to social action as was any Methodist, Unitarian or Congregationalist. He bestrode the civic life of West Bromwich as if he were the Colossus bestriding the harbour of Rhodes.

MEMORY LANE

By Professor Carl Chinn

Farley was typical of that small but crucial band of successful manufacturers that believed intensely in owing a duty to the locality from which their money was made.

Born in Great Bridge, Farley's father died when he was five but by hard work and flair he became a success in business. He then devoted himself to the well-being of the people of West Bromwich. The Improvement Commission was the body that mostly ran the town before it became incorporated as a borough in 1882 – when Reuben Farley was chosen as the first mayor.

Under his leadership, West Bromwich had obtained its own gas works, gained Dartmouth Park, built its Town Hall and other civic structures, and had adopted the Public Libraries Act on November 30, 1870. It was one of the first 50 places in the country to do so and was only the fifth in Staffordshire.

That was not the extent of Farley's remarkable commitment to the welfare of the people of West Bromwich.

He bestowed the Oak House Museum to the municipality and was a county magistrate, the long-serving president of the West Bromwich Building Society, and a member of both the Board of Guardians and the first School Board locally.

Unsurprisingly Farley was honoured as the first freeman of West Bromwich, for he had 'by his own ability, energy, and conscientious discharge of duty, together with his unvarying courtesy of demeanour, acquitted himself to the approbation of his fellow townsmen of all classes, without distinction of creed or party'.

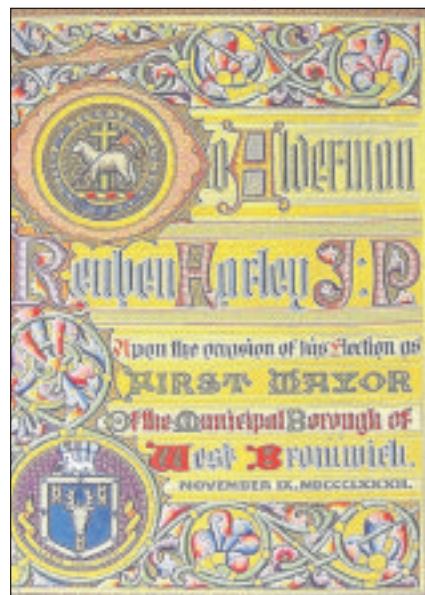
Reuben Farley died in March 1899 aged 73. Outside the region he was described as one of the leading figures in Black Country industrial life and a well-known public man in the Midlands who had held numerous important offices and had made valuable gifts to the town.

For all his achievements, Farley had

begun to slip away into the mists of the past, but a new book called 'Reuben Farley. The Man of West Bromwich' by Pauline Lawley and Anne Wilkins may put him back in the spotlight.

Pauline is the secretary of the West Bromwich Local History Society and a member of the Friends of Dartmouth Park, whilst Anne has served on the committees of various Friends groups.

The book is an innovative and imaginative work that brings together original research, with the evocative poetry of Lynne Pearce, the academic writing of Robert Trainor, the instructive words of Farley himself, the work of older historians such as William Ellery Jephcott, and the family history of the Farleys. It is published by Brewin Books and is available at £10 plus £2 postage and packing by contacting Pauline on 0121 588 4127 or at paulinelawley@talktalk.net. It is on sale at the West Bromwich Local History Society meetings which take place on the first Friday evening of each month at All Saints Church.



The illuminated address presented to Reuben Farley

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Long-time sponsors visit India to meet teenager

A COUPLE from Stourbridge have recently returned from India where they visited a 17-year-old boy they have sponsored for more than seven years through a child development charity.

Peter and Jane Baxter, aged 63 and 59, established a friendship with teenager Samya through letters.

He lives with his parents in a community in East India, where houses are typically constructed with dirt floors, mud walls and wooden roofs.

Most adults in Samya's community are unemployed but some work as day labourers and earn the equivalent of £7 a month.

The couple also sponsor 14-year-old Ingabire from Rwanda, who they have also supported over seven years.

Jane said: "It was a long-awaited experience to meet Samya. We are

always thrilled to receive his letters. It was such a joy to meet his friends and family, and see his smiling face

"It was extremely emotional to actually see him face to face. He has grown into a handsome young man, and told me he considers me and Peter as extended family, almost like godparents.

"We are confident and pleased to know he is part of a very loving extended family, and through the project he will continue to grow and be a role model for younger children."

The couple have sponsored Samya through child development charity Compassion UK, who work with over 1.7 million children around the world.

Peter and Jane's sponsorship of £25 a month, enable Samya to receive nutritious meals, medical care and an education.



In India Peter and Jane Baxter meet 17-year-old Samya, who they have sponsored since he was 10

Councillors run up £5m allowances bill

COUNCILLORS in the Black Country and Staffordshire received nearly £5 million in allowances and expenses during the last financial year.

Black Country councils each paid out sums nearing £1m during 2014/15.

In Dudley councillors picked up a total of £842,446 in allowances and expenses. In Wolverhampton the figure was £928,231 and in Sandwell £929,176. Councillors in Walsall received £847,812.

The Taxpayers' Alliance called the findings 'shocking' and called on councillors to 'show restraint'.

Dudley Council's leader Pete Lowe said: "Our allowances are lower than most of our Black Country neighbours and we work hard to ensure we provide value for money for the people of the borough." Sandwell Council leader Darren Cooper, said: "We have made a conscious decision not to increase members' allowances during the six years I have been leader of the council."

Meanwhile, Staffordshire County Council paid out £931,221. Stafford Borough Council's figure was much lower, with its members receiving £317,871.

Dismissed thief kept collecting charity tins

A SHAMELESS drug addict repeatedly stole from a charity by continuing to pick up collection boxes after he was sacked due to theft, a court heard.

Shafakat Hussain also terrified a 17-year-old girl during a burglary.

Hussain was sacked by Sweet4Smiles amid fears he was taking cash intended for the charity, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told. But the 41-year-old continued to pick up its collection boxes and pocketed the cash.

By John Scott

Cash Converters store in

Mr David Bennett, prosecuting, said police found CCTV footage that showed him stealing some of the boxes from the Robin 2 club in Bilston and the Edgobaston offices of Severn Trent Water on September 30 and July 7, respectively.

West Bromwich by the defendant's partner, Claire Kierczek, aged 31, from Buffery Road, Netherton. She was arrested the following day at the Sandfield Road, Stone Cross, address where the pair were then living.

Then at lunchtime on October 12 a teenaged girl heard an intruder at her family's home in Charlemont Avenue, West Bromwich, where she was alone.

Hid

Mr Bennett continued: "She phoned her mother and then heard footsteps slowly coming upstairs and hid in a cupboard. Not long afterwards the burglar opened the cupboard door and the pair came face to face."

Hussain, who had convictions for 17 previous offences, turned and fled with a £250 camera. The teenager told police: "I was scared witless and never want to be as afraid as that again."

Less than two hours later the camera was sold at a

Teenagers among 80 revenge porn victims

A TOTAL of 80 people have reported themselves victims of 'revenge porn' to West Midlands Police, including 13 teenagers.

A new law was introduced in England and Wales over sharing sexually explicit images without the subject's consent in April last year.

Of 80 reported cases since the new law was introduced in April last year, 70 of the victims were women.

More than half the total number of complaints involved victims in their 20s, with 13 teenagers also targeted. The oldest victim was in their 60s.

The figures, released following a Freedom of Information request, also revealed only 15 suspects were charged following the 80 complaints. Six others received a caution.

Sarah Green, acting director at the End Violence Against Women Coalition, said the introduction of the law had been an important step forward.



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Runners are resolute in support for stroke cause

MORE than 400 people ran, jogged and walked to raise vital funds for the Stroke Association at the charity's Resolution Run held at Hagley Hall.

On Sunday, March 13, a sea of purple fundraisers completed a 5k or 10k course.

Katrin Winstanley, Events Manager at the Stroke Association, said: "With around 152,000 strokes a year in the UK – that's around one every three and a half minutes – it is vital that we have people like our Resolution Runners to raise funds and help us conquer stroke."

"We're extremely grateful to everyone who took part. It was a fantastic turn out and a great day for everyone involved. We'd also like to thank Lord Cobham, Clent Hills Rotary Club and Hagley Rotary Club, who helped to raise awareness and organise the run."

"The money raised on the day will fund vital research and support, as well as help to prevent people from having a stroke."

A total of 18 runners from Black Country law firm Higgs & Son completed the charity race putting them well on their way to their fundraising target.

The intrepid team tackled a taxing course in the second annual Resolution Run at Hagley Hall, raising much needed funds for The Stroke Association.

Tim Jones, head of the firm's corporate social responsibility programme, said: "To date we have raised £1,238 of the £1,500 target we set for this race alone – an incredible amount thanks to the efforts of all the runners. The Stroke Association is our nominated Charity of the Year and I am delighted that so many Higgs & Sons' employees took part."



A sea of purple are the runners and walkers get warmed up at Hagley Hall



The team from Higgs and Co raised over £1,200 for the Stroke Association

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UKIP MEP supports mosque unity event

POLITICIANS, police and religious leaders in the Black Country are joining forces to tackle the threat of radicalisation.

Around 50 people from different faiths and backgrounds met at Baitul Afta Mosque, Wolverhampton, with UKIP West Midlands Euro MP Bill Etheridge, Wolverhampton South West Labour MP Rob Marris and representatives of West Midlands Police.

The United Against Extremism event, organised by The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Wolverhampton, was held to launch a campaign to distribute half a million leaflets informing people of how best to deal with radicalisation and fundamentalism.

Safeguard

Mr Etheridge said: "To safeguard our communities we need to work together as a unit, irrespective of faith, political parties, colour or creed.

"Terrorists have no faith, no religion or sympathy. They will kill anyone. This has to stop.

"These are dangerous times, where people of peace and of decent values have to pull together. It is not useful or helpful to label people as 'the other'.

"I've travelled across the European continent regularly with my job and it's like a war zone, there are soldiers everywhere you look. People are on edge, people are distrusting, people are worried. The world is changing. We have to unite in peace and harmony with each other, with the people who contribute to this country, civilised decent people.

"UKIP are not against immigration, we are about controlling the numbers."

Reverend John Bennett and Mr Marris also spoke at the event.

The mosque is keen to make people aware that the fundamentalist views held by terrorists are in the minority, with most Muslims part of a moderate community of acceptance and tolerance.

Toby Ephram, outreach coordinator and president of pan-African Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Midlands, said: "These terrorists are not interested in what religion you are, what culture you are from, they are just interested in causing destruction. It is time to unite.

Muhammad Ashraf, regional president of Ahmadiyya Muslim Association in Wolverhampton, hoped the 'Islam's response to extremism' leaflets would help understanding.



Joining forces against extremism – Toby Ephram, UKIP's Bill Etheridge, Maqsood Saeed and Kashif Bhatti

Drink-driving car valet is locked up over weapons find

A COURT heard that a terrified neighbour called police after spotting a man with a gun in a Dudley street.

The anonymous caller also gave details of a Ford Focus that was traced to 35-year-old Banaris Ali, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told. When police swooped on his bedsit in a multi-occupied address in Fir Street, Kates Hill, he was not at home but they found a stun gun disguised as a mobile phone and a small amount of cannabis, said Mr Timothy Sapwell, prosecuting.

The Ford Focus drove past the property at high speed but was caught by police. They discovered a gas operated BB gun that looked like a semi-automatic pistol. Car valet Ali – who also failed a drink-drive test – said he had been outside the address with the BB gun to 'move on' strangers who had been sitting outside in a van. He said they had given him 'bad feelings'. Mr Sapwell said: "He confessed that he would have threatened them with the weapon if they had not left."

Ali said he found the stun gun in the street and initially thought it was a mobile phone. After discovering it was a Taser he decided to keep it for his own protection, being unaware this was illegal.

Mr Richard Partridge, defending, said: "This is not a man of violence. He was just foolish. There had been a number of break-ins at the flats and perhaps this was the reason for the paranoia. He did not have a charger for the Taser."

Ali admitted possession of a disguised weapon and imitation firearm, and drink-driving. He was jailed for two years and nine months.

MP concern at too many zero hour contracts

NEARLY 70,000 people are on 'zero hours' contracts across the West Midlands, new figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reveal.

A total of 69,000 workers in the region were not guaranteed minimum hours in their job. The total represents 2.6 per cent of the region's workforce.

Across the country, 801,000 people were employed on the controversial contracts.

The figures were as of December last year – an increase of 2.3 per cent on the same period in 2014. The national figure represents 2.5 per cent of the UK's entire workforce, according to the study.

Zero-hours contracts, or casual contracts, allow employers to hire staff with no guarantee of work.

They have proved highly controversial – with concerns they do not offer financial stability and security.

Confidence

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said: "Too many local people on zero-hours contracts have told me they don't know how many hours they'll get to work from one day to the next and some find job security is non-existent.

"These 'no promises' contracts are another sign that working people aren't feeling a recovery and businesses still don't have the confidence to take people on permanently.

The Labour MP continued: "Much more action is needed to ban zero-hours

By Rob Cox

exploitation, with an end to zero-hours workers being forced to make themselves available even when there's no work for them."

People on zero-hours contracts were more likely to be young, in part-time work, women, or in full-time education when compared with other people in employment.

The figures also showed, on average, someone on a zero-hours contract usually worked 26 hours a week.

Around one in three on a zero-hours contract wanted more hours. In comparison, 10 per cent of other people in employment wanted more hours.

Nick Palmer, a statistician for the ONS, said: "This latest figure is rather higher than the 69,000 people who said they were on these contracts in late 2014.

"Though at least some of this increase may be due to greater public recognition of the term 'zero-hours contract', there's also nothing to suggest this form of employment is in decline."

Dudley group expand

THE Black Country arm of a US manufacturing group has swooped to buy a Staffordshire welding company.

The price tag has not been revealed but it gives the UK arm of Manufacturing Technology a combined turnover in excess of £11 million and a workforce of 85. Based in Kingswinford, the group includes MTI Welding and British Federal. It's latest acquisition is Prospot in Tamworth.

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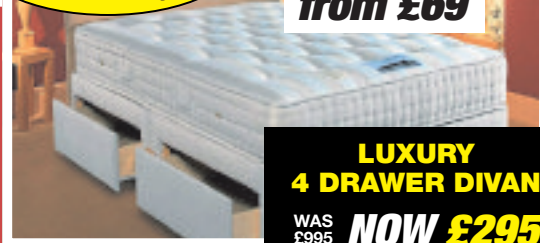


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OLDBURY, Titford Road £895 pcm+Fees
A very well presented, spacious semi detached period property perfect for a large family refurbished to a high standard. Briefly comprising 2 reception rooms, good size kitchen, utility, downstairs w.c. & shower room, 5 good size bedrooms, study area / dressing area, first floor shower & family bathroom, garage and off road parking for 3 cars. EPC: E



QUARRY BANK, Thorns Road £895 pcm+Fees
A superbly extended traditional detached home close to Merry Hill and local train stations. Featuring a large lounge, separate dining room, country style kitchen with range cooker, 3 double bedrooms, walk in shower room, extensive rear garden with ample parking and driveway to the front. EPC: TBC



ROWLEY REGIS, St Giles Close £750 pcm+Fees
A modern unfurnished detached house situated in a quiet cul-de-sac close to Rowley Academy comprising of: Through lounge/dining room, modern fitted kitchen, bathroom with jacuzzi bath, 3 bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing, garage and driveway parking, rear garden. EPC: TBC



WITHYMOOR, Aldeford Drive £725 pcm+Fees
Well presented semi detached house situated on this popular estate. Occupying a quiet cul de sac location. Featuring an attractive lounge, breakfast kitchen to the rear. To the 1st floor there are 3 bedrooms and a family bathroom, whilst to the outside there are gardens to front and rear. In addition, there is a garage and drive, and the property benefits from gas fired central heating and double glazing. Not to be missed! EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Haden Hill Road £695 pcm+Fees
Recently refurbished to a very high standard this 3 bedroom detached house close to Halesowen Town Centre features a lovely reception room, modern fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining room with patio doors leading to a private rear garden. Upstairs there are 2 double bedrooms & 1 single, modern fitted family bathroom with shower. Driveway for 2 cars. EPC: D



DUDLEY, Ivanhoe Street £650 pcm+Fees
Hicks Hadley are delighted to market this well presented terraced 3 bedroom property. Featuring on the lower level, a modern kitchen/diner and reception room, ground level has 2 reception rooms and main entrance hall, 2 bedrooms and family bathroom on the 1st floor and master bedroom (bed conversion) on the top floor. The property also benefits from rear garden and parking to the rear. This property must be viewed to fully appreciate. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Nimmings Road £650 pcm+Fees
Large and terraced property close to Blackheath Town Centre & Rowley Regis Train Station. This property features lounge, new fitted kitchen/dining area, 3 bedrooms, ensuite shower room, house bathroom with shower, central heating, double glazing, front & rear gardens with garage to rear of property and driveway parking for up to 3 cars. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, Spring Vale Road £650 pcm+Fees
An opportunity to acquire a well maintained traditional three bedroom detached property situated in a popular residential location in a quiet cul-de-sac close to local schools, amenities and road links. Comprises of a large living room, fitted kitchen with a double range cooker, downstairs w.c., 2 double & 1 single bedroom/study. Bathroom with shower, driveway/garage. A lovely property, not to be missed. MINIMUM CONTRACT 12 MONTHS. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Briery Close £595 pcm+Fees
Recently refurbished is this 3 bedroom semi detached family home in this popular residential area. Briefly comprising of 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms, front & rear garden. On road parking. Ideal for Timberbee Primary School. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Chiltern Close £595 pcm+Fees
A lovely unfurnished or furnished to suit 2 bedroom terrace property on the popular 'Squirrels' estate. Featuring a spacious living room, fitted kitchen, conservatory, 2 double bedrooms, refitted shower room, gas central heating, private rear garden with decking, parking area. MINIMUM CONTRACT 12 MONTHS. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Clifton Road £575 pcm+Fees
A property not to be missed! Set within a quiet cul-de-sac, this immaculate and freshly decorated mid terrace property comprising of: 2 double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, good sized lounge, modern kitchen, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, driveway parking for 3 cars, small rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Haden Arch Court £575 pcm+Fees
Contemporary living in Halesowen. This 1st floor spacious apartment above the archway, within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre and buses, the apartment features gas central heating, double glazing, open plan living room/fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower/cubicle, allocated parking. EPC: B



HALESOWEN, Milverton Close £575 pcm+Fees
A modern furnished to suit 2 bedroom ground floor flat in this very popular residential area comprising of: large lounge, 2 double bedrooms, fitted kitchen with appliances, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, parking space. EPC: D



LYE, STOURBRIDGE, Overman Close £575 pcm+Fees
Beautifully presented and not to be missed! Located at the end of a cul-de-sac, this 2 double bedroom modern mid terrace property features a spacious lounge, dining kitchen with white goods and integrated electric oven and separate gas hob, downstairs WC, family bathroom with shower, wardrobes in the master bedroom and an enclosed rear garden. Also benefiting from off road parking, gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Hagley Road (Rosegardens) £550 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished 1st floor coach house apartment within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre and on a major bus route. Featuring gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, parking space, and a lovely communal garden. An internal inspection is highly recommended. EPC: TBC



CRADLEY HEATH, Petford Street £525 pcm+Fees
Located in a very popular area, within walking distance to local shops and buses, is this unfurnished modern semi detached house, comprising of: 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, cosy lounge, downstairs WC, bathroom with shower, rear garden, driveway and garage. EPC: C



DUDLEY, Southgate Way £499 pcm+Fees
A stunning and spacious well presented furnished to suit 1st floor apartment featuring 2 bedrooms, electric storage heating, double glazing, open plan living room with fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, allocated parking space. Viewing highly recommended. EPC: C



NETHERTON, Mousesweet Lane £450 pcm+Fees
A modern style furnished to suit ground floor apartment in superbly convenient location in a quiet cul-de-sac featuring entrance hallway, lounge with electric fire, fitted kitchen with appliances, 1 double bedroom, bathroom suite with shower, rear access to private courtyard, driveway for 2 cars, gas central heating, double glazing. EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Luanne Close £425 pcm+Fees
This lovely unfurnished ground floor apartment, with views over the canal and on a popular development. Featuring 1 bedroom, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with small fridge and washing machine, gas central heating, bathroom with shower, allocated parking, communal garden. EPC: C



KIDDERMINSTER, Bewdley Road £350 pcm+Fees
A fully re-furnished 1st floor studio apartment comprising of a combined lounge/bedroom, fitted kitchen with electric cooker, white bathroom suite with shower. Gas central heating, double glazing. EPC: TBC



LYE, High Street £330 pcm+Fees
Located in the centre of Lye at Lye Cross. This 2nd floor flat above shops features a large lounge, kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, and is available immediately. EPC: TBC

PROPERTY

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Two-bedroom detached has been refurbished



THIS two-bedroomed detached house in Neptune Street, Tipton, has been recently refurbished. It is for sale through Goodchilds at £140,000.

It has a lounge with a feature open fireplace, a dining room with a feature fireplace, a kitchen with fitted units, a dressing room, master bedroom, second bedroom and a bathroom with a white suite. There is a good-sized rear garden which has been hard landscaped for ease of maintenance. This includes a paved patio.

For further information about this property contact Goodchilds on 0121 5067670 or visit the website at www.goodchilds-uk.com



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Town's traders launching a bid to thrive again



Backing the Halesowen BID – Alan Bowler, Brian Stokes, Eve O'Connor and Wayne Edwards

HALESOWEN

EFFORTS are underway to revitalise Halesowen's shopping heart and bring in new businesses.

Halesowen Chamber of Trade, led by its chairman and town businessman Wayne Edwards, has decided with help from Dudley Council to seek the support of town centre traders and businesses for the creation of a Halesowen Business Improvement District (BID).

A BID is an initiative run solely by local businesses, who join together and vote to make a collective contribution to a fund which can then be used to deliver improvements to a defined area, thus creating a more attractive and safe environment for shoppers and visitors.

It would enable the town's business owners to work together to decide how the area should be improved, share ideas on how to increase footfall and ensure the BID levy money is spent wisely and locally – unlike business rates, which are paid to the local authority with part going to Central Government.

The chamber has appointed a BID manager, Barry Wheeler, to oversee and drive forward the efforts to inform traders and businessmen in the area of the initiative and to seek their support.

"Halesowen once had a thriving town centre with a large variety of shops and businesses to draw in shoppers, diners and other visitors. Lately, like so many retail centres it has suffered from a fall in numbers of shoppers and several shops have closed leaving undesirable gaps where once there were thriving businesses.

Forefront

"Now Halesowen has the chance to lift itself out of decline and to bring itself back into the forefront of Black Country shopping centres to rival bigger neighbours.

"There is a wealth of history and character in our small town, within and nearby to the town centre making Halesowen not just a good place to shop but also to seek out and enjoy its other attractions and facilities – such as Cornbow Hall,



Barry Wheeler is urging traders and businesses to back the BID

St John's Church, Halesowen Leisure Centre and much more.

"The recently refurbished Cornbow Centre, the opening of rival Lidl and Aldi supermarkets and the establishment of the Travelodge all demonstrate the confidence of developers in our town," said Mr Wheeler. He is already seen regularly around the town centre talking to shop owners and discussing how best this initiative, if approved, can bring benefits to the town and their businesses.

The next steps in the BID project include forming a group of town centre businessmen to attend regular meetings throughout the development period; development of a number of communications channels to ensure that all businesses are aware of the latest news on progress.

A web page has already been developed within the newly created Halesowen Town Centre website and a regular newsletter will be issued with up-to-date information.

Development of a draft BID constitution and financial appraisals will be put to businessmen in the late summer for a vote to decide whether or not to progress with the establishment of a Halesowen BID.

Mr Wheeler urged traders and businessmen in the town to join the project to rejuvenate Halesowen town centre.

"A BID will give us the means to make improvements to the town that will see the visitors return. Best of all, it enables you, the local business owners, to decide where and how the money is spent. But we can only do all of this with your support. I am out and around the town regularly and will be inviting you to meetings in the Cornbow Hall. Do come along and tell us what you think of the proposals and how our town centre can benefit," he enthused.

Mr Wheeler can be contacted at barry.wheeler@halesowentowncentre.co.uk or on 07778 004950.

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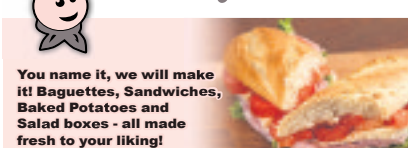
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Amanda Hodgetts and Eve O'Connor dig for victory last year

Brilliantly blooming boat boost



Maureen Morley, Jon Jones, Sheila Campbell and Jeni Hatton launch the blooming boat

HALESOWEN

THE committee behind Halesowen's entry for Britain in Bloom is stepping up its efforts this year.

A replica narrowboat decked out with floral displays will form the centrepiece of the town's entry this year.

Halesowen in Bloom's narrowboat is to be sited on a plot next to the traffic island at the bottom of Mucklow Hill.

Members of Coombeswood Canal Trust based at Hawne Basin have given their expertise and time free to produce the replica narrowboat which is based on the canal tugs used at the now closed Stewarts & Lloyd tubes works at Coombeswood, which was situated on the Dudley No 2 Canal.

It has been decided to call the 'blooming boat' Hales Owen, the old way of spelling for the town dating back to 1177 when Halas or Hales was presented to David ap Owen the the Prince of Wales by Henry II, hence Hales Owen.

The plan is for the boat to be moved to its roadside mooring later this month so that the garden designers can begin the work of transforming it.

Last year Halesowen won gold in the Britain in Bloom regional awards in only its third year of entering the competition run by the Royal Horticultural Society.

Judging will take place on July 20 this year and the committee is hoping that as many businesses, community groups, schools and individuals as possible will get involved in putting on floral displays and planting bulbs.

Efforts to keep the town looking as pretty and tidy as possible have been ongoing for months including a series of litter picks which tied in with the Clean for the Queen campaign.

Halesowen in Bloom chairman Eve O'Connor said: "Hundreds of volunteers are already involved and we are doing our blooming best to get the town right."

"Community groups, including the canal trust, have come together



Eve O'Connor, Amanda Hodgetts and Steve Fitzpatrick celebrating in 2015

er to create the blooming boat and Halesowen in Bloom is really bringing the community together."

Eve, who is also manager of the Cornbow Centre, said the shopping centre, which features 50 shops, was also joining in the effort to make the heart of Halesowen as attractive as possible.

The Halesowen In Bloom efforts will ensure the town is at its best when the Rotary Club of Halesowen and Rowley Regis stages the annual Black Country Street Fayre on Saturday, July 9.

The streets will be full of amusements and entertainments and

there will be a greatly enhanced street market this summer, featuring stalls manned by local traders and charitable organisations.

The club, which is 34 members strong and includes businesspeople from all walks of life, is also a participant in Halesowen in Bloom competition.

Its main contribution is paying for the purchase and planting of a new tree to enhance the entrance to Leasowes Park.

The other Rotary event in Halesowen in July is the annual 10km Black Country Road Race and 5km Fun Run on Sunday, July 3.

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Family firm move to new premises Solicitors still branching out

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

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Moving

In early April AA Domestic will be moving home. After 17 years of trading from their shop in Halesowen the opportunity has come about to move into the town's prestigious shopping destination the Cornbow Centre.

The new premises is being fitted out to a very high standard and the family-run firm hope this will make the shopping experience at AA domestic even easier way to buy new products for the home.

Diane, who has been with the company for over 25 years, said: "With a lot more footfall coming through the



An artist's impression of the new shop opening at the Cornbow Centre

Cornbow Centre, we will also have new computerised systems in place enabling transactions to go through smoothly and without any hassle."

The new shop will be open early next month but will still have that family atmosphere with every customer to get that personal touch, that can sometimes be lost when dealing with the big major national companies.

All the staff are looking forward to the move and if you require their services in the meantime the old shop is still open. Contact 0121 550 9800. See the website at aadomesticappliances.net



AA Domestic Appliances

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

JORDANS Solicitors provide legal services including Wills and Probate, Property and Family Law from our offices in Halesowen and Blackheath.

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Michael Jordan LLB

Michael has been with the firm since 2006 when he joined as a trainee. He is now Managing Director specialising in Residential and Commercial Property.



Baldeep Kooner LLB

Baldeep is a Wills and Probate Specialist advising on Wills, Probate, Powers of Attorney, Tax Planning and Court of Protection cases.



Brinder Khara LLB

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Whilst the majority of our work involves divorce, we also assist those who are cohabiting and those who are in a civil partner-

ship. For information please call our Halesowen office on 0121 585 3900 or our Blackheath office on 0121 559 2922.

*Other members of the team include Rikki Baleman and Emma Hingley.

Rikki is a Qualified Solicitor specialising in Residential Property. He is vastly experienced in all aspects of buying and selling, including New Builds and Help to Buy Schemes.

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fast the ticket

Hello!

Adele gigs
preview

See Page 25



Right formula

Qemists – Page 25

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The Vamps



Friday and Saturday, 6pm
Genting Arena, B'ham
The British boyband pop-rockers come to Brum as part of their world tour following the success of second album Wake Up with supports from Conor Maynard, The Tide and Hometown. Visit www.gentingarena.co.uk

Richard Herring



Saturday, 7pm
Slade Rooms, W'ton
The 12th solo stand-up tour by Herring sees the comedian examine whether being a husband and father means he is finally fulfilled in new show Happy Now? Visit www.wolvescivic.co.uk

Dynamo: Seeing Is Believing



Sat and Sun, times vary
Barclaycard Arena, B'ham
Due to demand magician Dynamo has added these extra dates at the city centre mega-venue with evening performances and a Sunday matinee, in a tour being seen by 400,000 fans. Visit www.barclaycardarena.co.uk

Mary Poppins



until April 23
Birmingham Hippodrome
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Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

A-Ha
Tue at 6pm, £30.20 - £75.70
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA. Call 0121 780 4141

Room 94
Wed at 7pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Left For Red
Sat at 6pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Altered Sky
Thu at 7pm,
The Rainbow, Birmingham, B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

Nai Harvest
Wed at 7pm - 11pm,
The Rainbow, Birmingham, B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

Refused
Sat at 6pm,
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY. Call 0121 643 0428

Quinphonic Festival 2
Sun at 3pm - 11pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham, B30 3DZ. Call 0121 246 2273

Sunset Sons
Wed at 7pm - 11pm,
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY. Call 0121 643 0428

Morpheus Rising
Sun at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Shane Filan
Sat at 7.30pm - 10pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 01902 401211

Kick Up The 80s: 80s Tribute
Fri at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

John Otway & Wild Willy Barrett
Thu at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Purson
Wed at 8pm,
The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham, B5 4EG. Call 0121 632 6756

Janet Jackson (postponed)
Wed at 7pm,
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA. Call 0121 780 4141

HRH AOR On The Road 2016
Sat at 6pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

The Vamps
Fri at 7pm, Sat at 7pm,
Genting Arena, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Adele
Tue at 6.30pm, Wed at 6.30pm,
Genting Arena, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

UB40 Tribute
Sat at 9.30pm,
The Knights Quest, Rowley Regis, B65 0EE.

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

Maddy Prior
Tue at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. 01902 401211

Country Music Night
Sun at 8.15pm, £2
The Swan with 2 necks Longdon, nr Lichfield WS15 4PN

Bev Pegg's Railroad Skiffle Trio
Sun, 1pm - 3pm
Albrighton Sports & Social Club Albrighton, WV7 3QT. Call 07947 668750

BLUES & JAZZ

Jake And Elwood: Blues Brother Tribute
Fri at 7pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham, B30 3DZ. Call 0121 246 2273

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Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Birmingham Community Gospel Choir
Sat at 7pm,
The Drum, Aston on Carrant, Birmingham, B6 4UU. Call 0121 333 2400

Ex Cathedra And The CBSO: JS Bach's St Matthew Passion
Fri at 2pm - 5.30pm,
£9.50 - £40
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

A Grand Operetta Gala
Wed at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Satinder Sartaj
Fri at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

CBSO 2015-16 - Mahler's Tenth
Thu at 7.30pm, £12.50 - £45
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Heartbeat
Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm,
Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

Horrible Histories: Groovy Greeks
Fri at 6.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

The Hairly Maclary & Friends Show
Sun at 2pm, Mon at 11am, 1pm, 3pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH. Call 0121 446 3232

Horrible Histories: Incredible Invaders
Fri at 2.30pm, Sat at 6.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

Ireland's Call
Fri at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Trainspotting
Fri at 6pm, 8pm, Sat at 6pm, 8pm, Mon at 8pm, Tue at 8pm, Wed at 8pm, Thu at 8pm, mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH. Call 0121 446 3232

Cabaret XXL 2016
Thu at 9.30pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

The Government Inspector
Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2pm, 7.30pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Mary Poppins
Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 2pm, 7.30pm, £25.55 - £30.60
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Hello Kitty Live (Over 3s)
Tue at 3pm, £18 - £25
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Circus Of Horrors: Freakshow: Welcome To The Carnevil
Sat at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

COMEDY

Roadhouse Comedy
Mon at 8pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham, B30 3DZ. Call 0121 246 2273

Comedy Carousel & The Real Food Canteen
Thu at 7pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Richard Herring: Happy Now?
Fri at 7pm, £15
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

Comedy In The Met
Sat at 8pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

The Best In Live Stand-up Comedy
Fri at 7pm, Sat at 7pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Russell Howard: Work In Progress (postponed)
Fri at 8pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

TALKS

Gordon Buchanan - Lost Adventures
Wed at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

Adlais (Echo) - Melodic and Mythic Stories And Songs
Sat at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

CLUBBING

The Rainbow Venues' Festival: Chapter 12
Sat - Sun
The Rainbow, Birmingham, B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

Conya Doss
Thu at 7pm,
Hare & Hownds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ. Call 0844 870 0000

Vertigo
Sat at 9pm,
The Victoria, Birmingham, B1 1BN. Call 0121 633 9439

Keeping It Souful
Fri - Sat at 9pm - 2am,
The Victoria, Birmingham, B1 1BN. Call 0121 633 9439

Propaganda
Fri - Sat at 10.30pm - 3.30am,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

ART GALLERIES

Birmingham People And Change In The Inner-City
Fri at 10.30am - 5pm, Sat at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH. Call 0121 303 1966

Chance, Order, Change: Abstract Paintings 1939-1989
Sat at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, B15 2TS. Call 0121 414 7333

Laura Lancaster
Fri at 10am - 5pm, Sat at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 12pm - 4pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm, The New Art Gallery Walsall, WS2 8LG. Call 01922 654400

Jan Vanriet The Music Boy
Fri at 10am - 5pm, Sat at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 12pm - 4pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm, The New Art Gallery Walsall

Mental Spaces
Fri at 9am - 8.30pm, Sat at 9am, Sun at 9am, Mon at 9am - 8.30pm, Tue at 9am - 8.30pm, Wed at 9am - 8.30pm, Thu at 9am - 8.30pm, Light House, Wolverhampton, WV1 1HT. Call 01902 716055

Willard Wigan Homecoming Exhibition
Fri - Thu
Light House, Wolverhampton, WV1 1HT. Call 01902 716055

Dinh Q Le: The Colony
Fri at 11am - 5pm, Sat at 11am - 5pm, Tue at 11am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 11am - 5pm, Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Street, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS. Call 0121 248 0708

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Qemists stick to alternative formula



Hardcore electro-rockers Qemists are visiting Wolverhampton Slade Rooms tonight with Japan's Crossfaith

BRIGHTON rocks – and the latest band from the city by the sea, that's become a hotbed of punk, electro and other alternative sounds, is electro-rock quintet The Qemists.

Storming first single Run You, from new album Warrior Sound, featured on the trailer for Arnold Schwarzenegger movie Terminator Genisys and ITV's coverage of the Rugby World Cup.

Bruno Balanta, one half of the

band's vocal output, says: "We're Rage Against The Machine meets The Prodigy meets Public Enemy. The music encompasses our rock influences, urban ethics and the heavy dance-infused electronica we love."

The band that have toured with Korn and Enter Shikari are not about to embrace the mainstream.

"Are we going to end up going all commercial and making really poppy sounding tracks? No, that's never

going to happen because we're fans first and foremost of the type of music we're making. Why give up what you care about for cash?"

"For the last 16 months we've been pouring blood, sweat, and tears into our new album and I'm buzzing to unleash this record on the world live."

Tonight (Thursday) they are at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms with Japanese electro-metal icons Crossfaith.



Adele says Hello Brum

SHE'S the hottest ticket in town, in fact, Adele is the hottest ticket in any town... and she's coming to Birmingham Genting Arena for four nights of concerts.

The Brit School graduate from Tottenham is the great British music success story of the early 21st century.

In just six years since her debut album 19 in 2008, followed by 21 in 2011 and 25 last year, Adele Adkins has become a genuine superstar on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

She won an Oscar for her Bond song Skyfall in 2013 and the same year went to Buckingham Palace to receive the MBE from Prince Charles.

Awards

She has won multiple record industry awards, including Grammys, Ivor Novello and Brits.

Her emotional performance of Someone Like You at the 2011 Brit Awards was credited with propelling her to stardom. That took the song to number one as she became the first artist in the UK since The Beatles to have two top five singles and two top five albums at the same time.

Her concerts on Tuesday and Wednesday, then again on the following Friday and Saturday, are all sold out.

The Birmingham dates mark the end of the British leg of her first tour in four years, since she gave birth to son Angelo, and she will be touring Europe during May and June.

Village jazz club back at new venue

ONE of the West Midlands' favourite jazz clubs is back at a new venue.

Jazz Club 90, in the Shropshire village of Albrighton, near Wolverhampton, built up a loyal following among musicians and jazz fans over 25 years at The Harp pub. New owners meant a move for the organisers, who have found a new venue at Albrighton Sports and Social Club.

It launched last year with a 25th anniversary gig in October and is running twice a month sessions for the jazz-starved denizens of the Wolverhampton and Telford area. Sunday sessions are from 1pm to 3pm, and admission is £5. For more information see www.jazzclub90.co.uk

It's a Grand choice for one-night shows

IT'S a busy week of one-nighters ahead at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton.

Indian Punjabi singer, poet and actor Satinder Sartaaj will be in concert tomorrow evening (Friday) with ticket prices ranging from £25 to £100 for the Sufi superstar's performance.

Roll up and maybe throw up when the Circus of Horrors bring their 21st anniversary tour to the Lichfield Street venue on Saturday night.

A Grand Operetta Gala featuring music by Gilbert and Sullivan is on Wednesday. Irish song and dance show Ireland's Call is on Thursday, March 31. Call 01902 429212.

Play for those who miss a Heartbeat

HEARTBEAT, the popular ITV show about police in 1960s rural Yorkshire, is being revived on stage in Birmingham.

The popular Sunday night series with its nostalgic soundtrack ran for 18 years from 1992, based on the Constable books by ex-policeman Peter Walker under pen-name Nicholas Rhea. It originally starred Nick Berry as Pe Nick Rowan.

David Lonsdale will return in his TV role of David Stockwell, as will Steve Blakeley as Pc Geoff Younger, joined by Hollywood actor Matt Millburn as Pc Joe Malton. It is staged at the New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday, April 2.

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CHOICE



Zoe Ball and Ashley Banjo

Can't Touch This (BBC1, 6.10pm)
New series. Zoe Ball and Ashley Banjo present the game show in which 16 contestants are challenged to battle their way through a giant obstacle course filled with prizes that are just out of reach. If the competitors are able to lay hands on any of the goodies within, they can take them home, including a grand prize that requires a giant leap of faith to claim. The contest gets under way as a father from Cardiff, a belly-dancer from Hull and a man called 'Mr Grumpy Pants' tackle the course. Narrated by Sue Perkins.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live.** **11.30 MasterChef.** (R) **12.00 BBC News: Weather.** **12.10 Football Focus.** **12.50 Saturday Sportsday.** **1.00 Can Seb Coe Save Athletics?** **7.10 Live Athletics.** The World Half Marathon Championships. **3.30 Film:** The Princess and the Frog. (2009) Disney animated musical fantasy, with the voice of Anika Noni Rose. **5.00 BBC News.** **5.10 Regional Programme.** **5.20 Pointless Celebrities.**
6.10 Can't Touch This. New series. Zoe Ball and Ashley Banjo present the game show in which 16 contestants battle their way through an obstacle course filled with prizes they must touch to claim.
7.00 The Voice UK. The first live show of the series arrives, as Paloma Faith, Boy George, Will.i.am and Ricky Wilson bring their teams to the quarter finals. Naturally, with the contest reaching its conclusion, the stakes have never been higher for the eight remaining contestants, who will need to produce barnstorming performances in order to secure a place in the semi-finals. After weeks of assessing the would-be stars from the comfort of their sofas, viewers at home now receive their first chance to voice their opinions via a public vote that will decide which act will be progressing to the contest's penultimate round.
8.55 The National Lottery Live. Welsh singer, radio broadcaster and TV presenter Aled Jones joins Gabby Roslin to push the Lotto button and reveal the all-important winning numbers.
9.05 The Voice UK. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes announce the results of this week's public vote, revealing which of the eight remaining contestants will be progressing to the semi-final.
9.35 Casualty. Connie becomes embroiled in a convicted murderer's plan to escape from prison, and Big Mac tries to help his old tormentor Mercedes see the error of her ways.
10.25 BBC News: National Lottery Update.
10.45 Film: Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull. (2008)
12.40 Film: Biker Boyz. (2003) **3.25 (BST) Weather for the Week Ahead.** **3.30 BBC News.**

BBC2

9.40 The Women's Football Show. (R) **10.10 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **11.10 Natural World: Polar Bears and Grizzlies – Bears on Top of the World.** (R) **12.00 Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul.** (R) **1.00 War Films, Talking Pictures.** **1.45 Film: The Heroes of Telemark.** (1965) **3.50 Flog It!** (R) **4.15 Big Dreams Small Spaces.** (R) **5.15 Gardeners' World.** (R) **5.45 Easter from King's.**
7.00 Tribes, Predators & Me. Gordon Buchanan travels to remote regions on three continents to learn how tribal cultures hunt and live alongside dangerous animals, beginning his journey in Ecuador, where he meets a family from the Waorani tribe. They venture into the Amazon Jungle, where the Waorani hunt monkeys and wild pigs using blowpipes and sharpened sticks, and try to trap an anaconda, an animal of great spiritual significance. (R)
8.00 Perry and Croft: Made in Britain. The celebration of comedy writing duo David Croft and Jimmy Perry continues with an examination of how their sitcoms chronicled British people's attitudes to love and sex. (R)
8.30 Dad's Army. Mainwaring orders his blundering platoon to guard the bank's money until repairs on the bomb-damaged vault are completed. Comedy, starring Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier. (R)
9.00 Being the Brontës. Martha Kearney, Helen Oyeyemi and Lucy Mangan to mark the 200th anniversary of Charlotte Brontë's birth by immersing themselves in the lives of the author and her sisters.
10.00 Film: Jane Eyre. (2011) A governess falls in love with her mysterious employer, only to discover he is concealing a terrible secret. Period drama, with Mia Wasikowska.
11.50 Film: Passion. (2012) Premiere. An advertising executive steals her protégé's ideas, setting in motion a lethal game of oneupmanship. Brian De Palma's thriller, with Rachel McAdams.
2.25 (BST) Monteverdi in Mantua: The Genius of the Vespers. (R) **3.25 The World's Most Expensive Stolen Paintings.** (R) **4.25 Mozart in Prague: Rolando Villazon on Don Giovanni.** (R) **5.25 This Is BBC Two.**

ITV

6.00 CITY: Bottom Knockor Street. **6.10 Bottom Knockor Street.** (R) **6.25 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.45 Sooty.** (R) **7.00 Super 4.** (R) **7.10 Looped.** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled!** **7.35 Scrambled!: Mr Bear: The Animated Series.** (R) **7.50 Scrambled!: Horrid Henry.** (R) **8.10 Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters.** (R) **8.30 Scrambled!: Jessie.** **9.05 Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show.** (R) **9.25 Thunderbirds Are Go.** (R) **9.50 Thunderbirds Are Go.** (R) **10.15 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **11.10 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **1.25 Judy Rinder.** (R) **2.25 The Chase.** (R) **3.25 Planet's Got Talent.** (R) **3.55 Film: Free Willy 3: The Rescue.** (1997) Family adventure, starring Jason James Richter. **5.35 Regional Programme : Weather.** **5.45 ITV News: Weather.**
6.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. Mark Hamill, best known as Luke Skywalker in the Star Wars films, steps out of his Jedi robes and into the guest announcer's chair this week, as Ant and Dec go head-to-head in a mini motorbike race around the studio. The duo introduce the fourth installment of Who Shot Simon Cowell?, in which they track down prime suspect Louis Walsh, and the cast of West End musical Billy Elliot try to transform Little Ant and Dec into ballet dancers. Plus, another lucky audience member is pick to take part in Win the Ads.
7.30 Live International Football. Germany v England (Kick-off 7.45pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the friendly encounter between the old rivals, which takes place at the Olympiastadion in Berlin. This game serves as a Euro 2016 warm-up fixture for both countries, and is the first meeting between the sides since November 2013. Arsenal defender Per Mertesacker grabbed the winning goal for Joachim Loew's team on that occasion, which was also a friendly in preparation for the 2014 World Cup. With analysis from Ian Wright, Lee Dixon and Lothar Matthaus.
10.25 The Jonathan Ross Show. **11.05 ITV News: Weather.** **11.20 International Football Highlights.** **12.15 Jackpot247.** **4.00 (BST) Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **4.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40 How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **7.05 Mountain Biking: The Pioneer.** **8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30 The Morning Line.** **10.00 Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.** **11.00 The Superhumans Show.** **11.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.25 The Simpsons.** (R) **1.00 The Simpsons.** (R) **1.30 Channel 4 Racing.** Live coverage from Haydock Park and Kempton Park. **4.00 Channel 4 Racing: Dubai World Cup.** Live coverage of the world's most lucrative flat meeting. **5.30 Speed with Guy Martin.** (R)
6.30 Channel 4 News.
7.00 The World's Weirdest Weather. The influence of strange weather on the natural world, examining the factors that create caves of sapphires, blue lava, rainbow-coloured clouds and perfect cubes, lead to gatherings of walrus, or cause snow and beaches to disappear. Previously seen on More4.
8.00 Shakespeare's Tomb. Documentary charting a two-year-long archaeological investigation of William Shakespeare's grave at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon. The grave itself bears a curse condemning anyone who disturbs the Bard's final resting place, reading "Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear/To dig the dust enclosed here/Blissed be the man that spares the stones/And cursed be he that moves my bones". For the first time since Shakespeare's death 400 years ago, the church has authorised archaeologists to conduct a study on the site, giving Kevin Colls of Staffordshire University, leading geophysicist Erica Utsi, and Cambridge historian Dr Helen Castor a chance to utilise state-of-the-art radar technology to build up a picture of what lies beneath the surface without disturbing the hallowed site. As the team reveals, the results of their examination contained a few unexpected surprises.
9.00 Film: The Heat. (2013) Premiere. Action comedy starring Sandra Bullock and Melissa McCarthy.
11.25 Film: The Change-Up. (2011) Comedy, with Jason Bateman.
2.30 (BST) Holyoaks. (R) **4.40 Sarah Beeny's How to Sell Your Home.** (R) **5.05 Location, Location, Location.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55 The Fairly OddParents.** **9.30 The Saturday Show: Easter Special.** **11.30 Police Interceptors.** (R) **12.30 Film: Star Trek V: The Final Frontier.** (1989) Sci-fi adventure sequel, starring William Shatner. **2.35 Film: Columbo: By Dawn's Early Light.** (1974) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk and Patrick McGowan. **4.30 Film: Columbo: Murder, Smoke and Shadows.** (1989) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk.
6.20 NCIS: Los Angeles.
7.05 NCIS: New Orleans. The Big Easy's annual Red Dress Run is brought to an abrupt halt when participants discover a body on route. Luckily, the NCIS team is competing in the race, and is on hand to investigate. The victim is identified as petty officer Kelsey Weaver, who was last seen running through the city, shouting that she was being pursued by a man with a gun. CCTV footage shows no signs of Weaver's apparent assailant, but when toxicology reports reveal the dead woman had traces of a hallucinogenic drug in her system, Pride and his colleagues are drawn into the battle to stop the spread of this new narcotic substance.
8.00 NCIS. The team investigates the murder of a Navy commander's wife, determining whether it is linked to her role as a therapist, or is instead an act of terrorism.
8.55 5 News Weekend.
9.00 Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. A round-up of all the goals and talking points from League One and League Two.
9.40 Live Championship Boxing. Nick Blackwell v Chris Eubank Jr. Coverage of the bout for the British Middleweight title, which takes place at SSE Arena in London. Blackwell is attempting to make the third defence of the title he claimed by beating John Ryder in May 2015, which was followed by victories over Damon Jones and Jack Arfield later in the year. Meanwhile, Eubank Jr is aiming to win the belt for the first time, despite having previously won and defended the WBA Interim World title in 2015, before beating Gary O'Sullivan in a grudge match last December.
12.15 SuperCasino. **4.10 (BST) Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.** (R) **5.45 Chinese Food in Minutes.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Treasures of the Indus **8.00 Human Planet** **9.00 Follow the Money** **11.00 Film: Hello Quo** (2012) **12.20 Status Quo: Live and Acoustic** **2.20 (BST) Top of the Pops: 1981** **2.55 Top of the Pops: 1981** **3.25 Film: Hello Quo** (2012) **4.45 Sounds of the Sixties** **4.55 Close**
ITV2
12.40 The Almost Impossible Gameshow **1.40 Scorpion** **2.40 Film: Evan Almighty** (2007) **3.40 FYI Daily** **3.45 Film: Evan Almighty** (2007) **4.35 Britain's Got More Talent: Top Ten Surprises** **5.40 Film: The Mummy** (1999) **6.40 FYI Daily** **6.45 Film: The Mummy** (1999) **8.00 Film: The Back-up Plan** (2010) **9.00 FYI Daily** **9.05 Film: The Back-up Plan** (2010) **10.05 Celebrity Juice** **10.50 Family Guy** **12.20 American Dad!** **12.50 Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands** **2.40 (BST) Kylie Minogue: The Hot Desks** **2.50 Teleshopping** **5.50 ITV2 Nightscreen**
ITV3
12.05 Film: Carry On Jack (1963) **1.05 FYI Daily** **1.10 Film: Carry On Jack** (1963) **2.00 Film: Carry On Cleo** (1964) **3.00 FYI Daily** **3.05 Film: Carry On Cleo** (1964) **3.55 Rising Damp** **5.55 Doc Martin** **7.00 Midsomer Murders** **9.00 Rising Damp Forever** **10.00 Film: Rising Damp** (1980) **11.00 FYI Daily** **11.05 Film: Rising Damp** (1980) **12.05 Blue Murder** **2.25 (BST) ITV3 Nightscreen** **2.30 Teleshopping**
ITV4
12.10 Film: Gunsmoke (1953) **12.45 Live Snooker: Players Championship.** The opening semi-final from Manchester. **5.15 Pawn Stars** **5.45 Storage Wars: Texas** **6.45 Live Snooker: Players Championship.** **11.15 Film: The Wicker Man** (1973) **12.15 FYI Daily** **12.20 Film: The Wicker Man** (1973) **2.00 (BST) Hell on Wheels** **3.00 Teleshopping**
E4
11.00 Melissa & Joey **12.00 How I Met Your Mother** **1.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine** **2.00 The Goldbergs** **3.30 Film: Hairspray** (2007) **5.45 Rude!** (sh) **Tube Shorts** **6.00 The Big Bang Theory** **9.00 Film: Terminator Salvation** (2009) **11.15 Gogglebox** **2.25 (BST) Scheffer Bates: I Con** **2.55 Tattoo Fixers** **3.50 How I Met Your Mother** **4.40 Revenge**
Film4
11.00 The Phantom (1996) **1.00 Spy Kids 4: All the Time in the World** (2011) **2.50 Epic** (2013) **4.55 Freaky Friday** (2003) **6.55 Morning Glory** (2010) **9.00 The Family** (2013) **11.10 The Haunting in Connecticut 2: Ghosts of Georgia** (2013) **2.10 (BST) The Last Exorcism** (2010)

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CHOICE



Queen Elizabeth II

Our Queen at 90 (TV, 8pm)
To celebrate Elizabeth II's 90th birthday, this documentary has enjoyed privileged access to the Queen and to many members of the Royal Family during the year in which she became the nation's longest-reigning monarch. Prince Charles and his sons William and Harry reveal how she has inspired them, while Prince Andrew and his daughters Beatrice and Eugenie explain what she means to them, while political leaders, celebrities and ordinary people from all over the world reflect on their experiences of meeting her.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 BBC News. 10.00 Easter Worship 2016. **11.00** Urbi et Orbi. **11.25** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.10** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Father Brown. (R) **2.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **2.25** Rowing: The Boat Races. Live coverage of the men's and women's University Boat Races. **5.00** A Question of Sport. (R) **5.30** Songs of Praise.

6.05 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army and Me. New series. The presenter works alongside the Salvation Army's volunteers in a variety of roles, and reflects on how the charity has always been a part of his life.

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Rural developments in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. Matt Baker investigates local crafts, including stained glass artists and weathervane makers. Ellie Harrison meets farmers who keep turkeys for their eggs. Sean Fletcher looks into the region's links with daffodils, and Adam Henson meets a three-year-old girl getting to grips with lambing. Plus, Charlotte Smith reports on how beavers are returning to mainland Britain, and examines arguments for preserving or culling them. Including Weather For The Week Ahead.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce and the team head to the Royal Hall in Harrogate, with Alastair giving his highest valuation in 20 years on the show. Plus, the emotional story of a sapphire ring left to a young man by a recently departed friend, and the family history behind Betty's Tearooms.

9.00 The Night Manager. Pine fears his cover will be blown when he is forced to return to the hotel where he first encountered Roper. Burr faces the consequences of her failed mission. Last in the series.

10.00 BBC News.

10.30 Regional Programme.

10.30 Would I Lie to You? Team captains David Mitchell and Lee Mack are joined by Rhod Gilbert, Sally Phillips, Des O'Connor and Tess Daly on the comedy panel show. Hosted by Rob Brydon. (R)

11.00 Film: Little Fockers. (2010)

12.30 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.35** BBC News.

BBC2

6.55 This Farming Life. (R) 7.55 Gardeners' World. (R) **8.25** An Island Parish. (R) **8.55** Countryfile. (R) **9.55** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.25** The Best Dishes Ever. (R) **11.55** The Best Dishes Ever. (R) **12.25** Film: Kings of Kings. (1961) Drama, starring Jeffrey Hunter. **3.00** Flog It! (R) **3.30** Tim Rice - A Life in Song. (R) **5.00** The Secret History of My Family. (R)

6.00 Springwatch at Easter 2016. Chris Packham, Michaela Strachan and Martin Hughes-Games present the annual series.

7.00 Gareth Malone's Great Choir Reunion. Gareth continues his mission to reunite the remainder of all the choirs he has formed over the past 10 years. He tracks down some of the best singers from the South Oxhey Community Choir, the Military Wives and the nine workplace choirs he formed for the competition Sing While You Work. That's followed by frenzied preparations and rehearsals for the reunion concert. He may be able to bring together these singers from different groups across the country, but will he manage to get them singing together as a choir of choirs? (R)

8.00 Natural Born Winners. New series. Athletes Donovan Bailey, James Toseland, Gareth Thomas and Iwan Thomas travel around the world to compete in various countries' unusual and demanding sporting events, taking on local champions. The tour begins in the Welsh village of Llanyrdy Wells, where they enter in local fell running event Man Versus Horse, where they must run 21 miles across difficult terrain, competing against mounted opponents.

9.00 Tribes, Predators & Me. Gordon Buchanan joins a group of Bushmen in Botswana's Kalahari Desert to learn their ancient secrets for surviving on foot among wild lions.

10.00 Thirteen. Ivy is arrested after her DNA is found in the cellar. Christina begs the police to be allowed to speak to her, and finally discovers the shocking truth behind her disappearance.

11.00 The People v OJ Simpson: American Crime Story. (R)

11.50 Film: Youth Without Youth. (2007)

1.50 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) 2.45 Holby City. (R) **3.35** Film: Hockey. (2014) **4.45** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Bottom Knockor Street. 6.15 Bottom Knockor Street. (R) **6.25** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **6.50** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Super 4. (R) **7.15** Looped. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Bear Grylls Survival School. **8.05** Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **9.55** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.25** TV News: Weather. **12.35** Film: Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory. (1971) Musical fantasy, with Gene Wilder. **2.35** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **3.35** Off Their Rockers. (R) **4.10** Film: A View to a Kill. (1985)

6.35 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 The Chase Celebrity Special. New series. Bradley Walsh presents as Coronation Street's Hayley Tamaddon, football star Geoff Hurst, comedian Rob Beckett and presenter Gabby Roslin pit their wits against ruthless quiz geniuses in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds for charity. They must work as a team and play strategically to answer general knowledge questions against the clock and race down the game board to the exit without being caught.

8.00 Our Queen at 90. Members of the royal family pay tribute to Elizabeth II, and politicians, celebrities and ordinary people from all over the world talk about their experiences of meeting her.

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.15 The Road to Coronation Street. Jane Horrocks and Jessie Wallace star in a one-off drama telling the story of how the long-running soap was born. Tony Warren joins producer Harry Elton and director Derek Bennett as they struggle to create the programme, faced with opposition from ITV's formidable bosses Sidney and Cecil Bernstein, while Margaret Morris begins the hunt for the show's cast. (R)

11.55 Premiership Rugby Union.

12.45 Jackpot247. 3.00 ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.25** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.45** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Frasier. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.50** Film: The Great Mouse Detective. (1986) Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of Vincent Price. **4.25** Film: Hop. (2011) Part-animated comedy, starring James Marsden.

6.15 Ice Age: The Great Egg-Scapade. Short animated comedy, featuring the characters from the movie series. Sid looks after some eggs waiting to hatch, but a villainous rabbit steals them all.

6.40 Channel 4 News.

7.00 The Secret Life of the Zoo. The Hi Way elephant family have been hit with a potentially deadly virus affecting animals in captivity and in the wild. With the youngest members of the family most at risk, the keepers and Chester Zoo's veterinary team do all they can to combat the mysterious illness. Meanwhile, Mac the stallion zebra is introduced to the zoo's three mares in the hope they will produce much needed offspring for this endangered species.

9.00 There's also a look into the bizarre world of the naked mole rat. (R)

8.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales follow the ancient routes of the Vikings and travel to Stockholm, where they navigate the city's canals. They later head out into the far-flung islands of the archipelago, before paying a visit to Drottningholm Palace Theatre, where they meet Wallander actor Kristian Henschen.

9.00 Indian Summers. Ralph tries to befriend a Maharaja to advance his standing, but Cynthia is thrown by an encounter with the ruler's mistress. The Dalai family are drawn into Adair's secrets.

10.00 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R)

11.00 Film: Inglourious Basterds. (2009)

1.55 Embarrassing Bodies Down Under. (R) **2.40** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.05** Selling Houses with Amanda Lamb. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.30** Tickety Toc. (R) **6.40** Zack and Quack. **6.55** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.20** Little Princess. (R) **7.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **7.45** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.10** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.30** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **8.45** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **8.55** Film: Thomas & Friends: Sodor's Legend of the Lost Treasure. (2015) Animated adventure, featuring the voice of Joseph May. **10.05** The Fairly OddParents. **10.40** Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. (R) **11.20** Now That's Funny! (R) **12.25** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **1.25** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **2.25** Film: Watership Down. (1978) Animated drama, with the voice of John Hurt. **4.10** Greatest Animated Movies.

7.00 Now That's Funny! Cats battle it out with dogs and a man displays a talent for summoning animals. Plus, people failing to look where they are going and the latest Stars of the Week.

8.00 Penn & Teller: Fool Us in Vegas. Jonathan Ross introduces more magic acts determined to dazzle the duo, featuring card tricks set to instrumental music, a performance of prediction and a spirited illusion. Plus, Teller performs a trick with a ball and string.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Film: Due Date. (2010) Premiere. Upright architect Peter is desperate to make it home before his pregnant wife goes into labour, but an altercation with an air marshal gets him banned from flying. Unlike salvation is at hand in the shape of an oddball aspiring actor on his way to Hollywood, and the duo set off on a comical journey across America. Directed, starring Robert Downey Jr and Zach Galifianakis.

11.00 Film: The Bounty Hunter. (2010) A bail enforcement agent is assigned to track down his own ex-wife, a reporter who is investigating a murder cover-up. Action comedy, starring Gerard Butler and Jennifer Aniston.

1.05 SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** The Tube: Going Underground. Documentary going behind the scenes on the London transport network. (R) **4.00** Wildlife SOS. (R) **4.50** Great Artists. The life and work of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 The Passion 8.00 The Brontës at the BBC 9.00 How to Make a Number One Record 10.00 Film: Love Is All You Need (2012) 11.50 One-Hit Wonders at the BBC 12.50 Len Goodman's Dancing Feet: The British Ballroom Story 1.50 The Brontës at the BBC 2.50 The Story of British Pathe 3.50 Close

ITV2

12.05 Take Me Out 1.20 Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) 2.20 FYI Daily 2.25 Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) 3.00 Film: Ella Enchanted (2004) 4.00 FYI Daily 4.05 Film: Ella Enchanted (2004) 4.55 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 6.30 Film: The Mummy Returns (2001) 9.00 Ibiza Weekend 10.00 Family Guy 10.30 Bordertown 11.00 Family Guy 12.30 American Dad! 1.25 The Cleveland Show 2.15 Teleshopping 5.45 ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.20 FYI Daily 11.25 Film: Carry On Henry (1971) 12.10 Film: Carry On Girls (1973) 2.00 Film: Carry On Matron (1972) 3.00 FYI Daily 3.05 Film: Carry On Matron (1972) 3.50 Rising Damp 5.50 Doc Martin 6.55 Film: Rising Damp (1980) 7.55 FYI Daily 8.00 Film: Rising Damp (1980) 9.00 Rising Damp Weekend 10.00 Film: Steptoe and Son (1972) 11.00 FYI Daily 11.05 Film: Steptoe and Son (1972) 12.00 Film: Steptoe and Son Ride Again (1973) 1.00 FYI Daily 1.05 Film: Steptoe and Son Ride Again (1973) 2.05 Wylliffe

ITV4

11.40 MotoGP Highlights 12.45 Live Snooker: Players Championship. 5.15 Pawn Stars 5.45 Storage Wars 6.45 Live Snooker: Players Championship. 11.15 Film: Tin Cup (1996) 12.15 FYI Daily 12.20 Film: Tin Cup (1996) 1.55 Being Kevin Pietersen 3.00 Teleshopping

E4

1.00 Film: 17 Again (2009) 3.00 The Goldbergs 4.30 The Big Bang Theory 8.00 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD 10.00 Tattoo Fixers 12.00 The Aliens 1.10 Virtually Famous 1.55 The 100 2.40 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD 3.25 Holyoaks

Film4

11.00 Catch That Kid (2004) 1.00 The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010) 3.10 Marmaduke (2010) 4.55 Sister Act (1992) 6.55 Rise of the Planet of the Apes (2011) 9.00 Fast & Furious 6 (2013) 11.35 Machete Kills (2013) 1.40 The Raid (2011) 3.50 Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Avengers Assemble, BBC1, 8.30pm

A mystical artefact is stolen from a top-secret military base by Thor's brother Loki, who plans to use it to bring about an alien invasion. Spymaster Nick Fury brings together a team of superheroes, including Iron Man, Thor, Captain America and the Hulk, to defend Earth from the impending attack. Action adventure uniting the Marvel comic-book characters, starring Robert Downey Jr, Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Mark Ruffalo, Scarlett Johansson, Tom Hiddleston, Jeremy Renner and Samuel L Jackson. (2012)

TUESDAY

Triple Cross, BBC2, 1.35pm

Fact-based Second World War spy adventure about Eddie Chapman, a bank robber who became a British double agent in exchange for money and a full pardon. Following the German invasion of Jersey, Chapman offers to provide information to the Nazis, who are unaware his loyalties really lie with the British Secret Service. With Christopher Plummer. (1966)



Avengers Assemble, Monday, BBC1, 8.30pm

WEDNESDAY

Snake Eyes, BBC1, 11.45pm

A corrupt cop seals off all exits in a casino after the fatal shooting of a US Defence Department official – but while frantically searching for the assassin among the 14,000-strong crowd, he is daunted by the sheer scale of the challenge. Thriller from director Brian De Palma, starring Nicolas Cage. (1998)

THURSDAY

Pretty Woman, BBC1, 10.45pm

A ruthless millionaire hires a prostitute while on a business trip. Realising she may be useful in helping him keep up a successful appearance, he pays her to accompany him for a week as he associates with the rich and powerful – but falls in love despite their many differences. Romantic comedy, starring Richard Gere and Julia Roberts. (1990)

FRIDAY

The Last Stand, Channel 5, 10pm

The sheriff of a small town on the Mexican border tries to stop a drug lord from fleeing the country. Action thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. (2013)

A chilling new comedy series is on the horizon

Cast your mind back to New Year 2014, and the one-off comedy Two Doors Down, which was set at a disastrous Hogmanay party.

Well, it was disastrous for hosts Eric (Alex Norton) and Beth (Arabella Weir), who had to entertain their eccentric neighbours – viewers and critics had a whale of a time, which is why Two Doors Down is now back for a new six-part series.

Writers Gregor Sharp and Simon Carlyle are certainly excited about the show making the transition from radio series and festive special to fully fledged TV sitcom, especially as it's given them a chance to create some new neighbours to annoy Eric and Beth.

One of the new recruits is played by Rab C Nesbitt's Elaine C Smith, who Simon describes as a 'legend'. Elaine is equally complimentary about the writers, saying: "Two Doors Down is a fresh voice in comedy and, whether I was in it or

not, I'd watch it. It had a bit of Abigail's Party about it which I loved.

"My husband saw the pilot and raved about it. I said to my agent 'if anything comes up for Two Doors Down, count me in' thinking it would be a bit part in one of the episodes, so when they came back with Christine I was thrilled. I had been waiting for a role like this for a very long time after Rab C Nesbitt."

Hypochondriac Christine has certainly given the actress plenty to get her teeth into, Elaine says: "Christine is a single parent who lives with her teenage daughter, Sophie [Sharon Rooney], Christine's very like a man, which makes her liberating to play – she's had to be both parents to Sophie and has the freedom that males in comedy usually have – to be outrageous. She has some of the best lines I've ever had the joy to act."

And it seems there were plenty of good lines left over for her female co-stars, Arabella, Sharon and Doon Mackichan, who plays Cathy.

Elaine says: "Arabella had been in The Fast Show, I'd been in Naked Video and Doon in Smack the Pony so we've all come up through similar routes through sketch shows. Invariably, if you're a woman in a sketch show, you're on your own. Our role in the past was to feed the men in our shows the best lines.

"The day we all filmed a scene in a garden in Bishopton stands out to me as it was the four female leads and a female crew. I thought I was in a parallel universe! Women being allowed to be funny? It was just joyous."

The men will also be getting in on the action in this opening episode, as Eric accidentally leaves the freezer door open, so Beth decides to throw a party to use the up the food before it goes to waste.

Everything seems to be going well, until Cathy decides it would be a nice idea for Colin (Jonathan Watson) to restock his next-door neighbours' freezer with a whole Scottish salmon.



Doon Mackichan stars in Two Doors Down, Friday, BBC2, 10pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Eddie Izzard: Marathon Man for Sport Relief BBC2, 9.40pm

In 2009, comedian Eddie Izzard completed 43 marathons in 51 days across the UK, eventually raising over £1.8million. Then, in 2012, he planned to complete a staggering 27 marathons in 27 days across South Africa to reflect the 27 years that Nelson Mandela spent in prison. Sadly, he had to pull out for health reasons. Undeterred, Izzard returned to complete the challenge this year for Sport Relief, running over 700 miles in temperatures of up to 30 degrees celcius. This documentary covers Eddie's journey, in which he also explored the history of South Africa and Mandela as well as visiting communities, organisations and families that have all been helped by the work of Comic Relief.

TUESDAY

Live International Football ITV, 7.30pm

England v Netherlands. Mark Pougatch presents the best of the action from the friendly match at Wembley Stadium, as Roy Hodgson's side continued their preparations for Euro 2016. Surprisingly, the Dutch will not be involved in this summer's tournament in France, having finished a

very disappointing fourth in their qualification group, below Czech Republic, Iceland and Turkey, which was not even enough to merit a play-off place.

Bake Off: Creme de la Creme BBC2, 8pm

We've had junior and celebrity versions of The Great British Bake Off, and now it's time for another spin-off – and this one is giving the professionals a chance to show what they can do. Presented by Michelin-starred chef Tom Kerridge, it sets out to find Britain's best team of pastry chefs, whether they come from top hotels or the armed forces. They'll all be making stunning patisserie and desserts in the hopes of impressing the judges Benoit Blin, chef patissier at Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Claire Clark MBE, world-renowned pastry chef and consultant, and Cherish Finden, executive pastry chef at The Langham, London. In the first edition, three teams have to make over 100 perfect miniature pastries, before reinventing the humble apple crumble as a five-star dessert.

WEDNESDAY

Horizon BBC2, 8pm

Examining Dark Energy, the mysterious force that is unexpectedly causing the universe's expansion to speed up. Its effects were discovered in 1998, but physicists still do not know what it is, and its very existence calls into question Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity; the cornerstone of modern physics. The hunt for the identity of Dark Energy is on, and although experiments conducted on earth and in space generate data that might provide a clue, physics is hoping another Einstein might emerge and write a new theory that explains the mystery.

THURSDAY

Medical Mysteries: The Extraordinary Swollen Woman & Other Medical Mysteries Channel 5, 8pm

Another batch of puzzling health issues are heading our way this week,



Bake Off: Creme de la Creme, Tuesday, BBC2, 8pm

so if you're in the slightest bit squeamish, look away now. Pregnant women expect to get bigger in a certain area during their nine-month term, but 33-year-old Izzy is suffering from bizarre swellings all over her body and face – but has no idea why. However, a new GP may be able to unlock the mystery of her condition. Also hoping for a miracle cure is Beth who, for the past two years, has been struggling to leave her home due to extreme dizziness. Now she hopes a trip to see specialists in the US will help her. Finally, 11-year-old James suffers severe reactions whenever he steps outside – but can a cure be found for his allergy to sunlight?

FRIDAY

Billy Connolly's Tracks Across America ITV, 9pm

Pack up your belongings in a spotted handkerchief and grab your harmonica – we're ridin' the rails with Billy Connolly. For his latest travelogue, the comedian is travelling across the USA by train, from Chicago to New York, taking in 26 states, 6,000 miles and some parts of America that UK viewers rarely see on screen. Billy will even be providing his own soundtrack, courtesy of his banjo. In the first episode, he makes a stop at the Minnesota State Fair, where the attractions include corn beauty pageants and live animal births.

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BRAIN GYM No.370

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

25	18	23	4		25	7	8	16	14	12	19	23
6			10						14		19	9
14		7	23	1	20	16	23	11		1		23
16	25	1				8			13	6	14	26
4			17		25	18	26	13		11		17
	24	23	23	6		1		20	14	22	22	8
				1		13		1				
21	18	16	16	8		18		5	18	17	3	
19		7			1	13	14	26		18		15
16	5	1	11			19				1	16	7
11		20		5	23	23	2	23	26	20		1
23		23		23				14		23		16
20	14	16	1	21	17	23	20		25	6	14	4

H	X	U	D	Y	E	Q	W	R	Z	L	B	A
N	M	G	F	P	V	C	K	S	O	I	T	J

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	14											
2	15											
3	16											
4	17											
5	18											
6	19											
7	20											
8	21											
9	22											
10	23											
11	24											
12	25											
13	26											

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1. Service-chief? (4-6)
- 7. A full round or a small portion (5)
- 8. A tinier form of sloth (7)
- 10. Left in error? (3,5)
- 11. Gives someone their due (4)
- 13. Tentative suggestion put out by some animals (6)
- 15. Human or not, they exist (6)
- 17. A French act free from restraint (4)
- 18. Mark's follower getting close but losing interest (8)
- 21. The star is disturbed by what anonymous letters may contain (7)
- 22. Beaten finally, and finished off (5)
- 23. Not praised, but need it drag out like this? (10)

Down

- 1. A strike about a sailor may be hard to break (5)
- 2. Reached round and ate it (8)
- 3. A matter of some gravity (6)
- 4. Being particular, it gets me to come up (4)
- 5. Prepare to travel in a decent raincoat (7)
- 6. Located the cause of the trouble and criticised (5,5)
- 9. Men's assets as a basis for taxation (10)
- 12. Belief about men in the building (8)
- 14. Possibly sore after the finish, but give approval (7)
- 16. His accounts may be all at sea (6)
- 19. Took part, perhaps (5)
- 20. Vehicle that could be an imposition on one (4)

1		2		3		4		5	
6									
7				8					9
10								11	
						12			
13		14				15			
						16			
17				18				19	
				20					
21								22	
23									

Quick Clues:

Across

- 1. Premonition (10)
- 7. Initiate (5)
- 8. Student (7)
- 10. Interloper (8)
- 11. Droop (4)
- 13. Kidnap (6)
- 15. Diminish (6)
- 17. Eject (4)
- 18. Protector (8)
- 21. Junior (7)
- 22. Concerning (5)
- 23. Compassion (10)

Down

- 1. Combat (5)
- 2. Disclaim (8)
- 3. Requisitioned quarters (6)
- 4. Dull (4)
- 5. Bewilder (7)
- 6. Binding (10)
- 9. Revivify (10)
- 12. Revere (8)
- 14. Argue (7)
- 16. Carrier (6)
- 19. Refuse (5)
- 20. Old (4)

Sudoku

	4		8	1			2	
		2					3	1
	3			2	4	9		6
4						5		
	2		3		9		1	
		5			2			8
2	9	5					7	
1	7					2		
	4		8	7			6	

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

2	9	8	4	5	3	1	7	6
7	6	3	2	1	5	9	4	
5	1	4	7	6	9	2	3	8
9	8	7	3	1	4	6	5	2
1	2	5	8	9	6	3	4	7
4	3	6	5	7	2	9	8	1
8	5	9	6	2	7	4	1	3
6	4	1	9	3	8	7	2	5
3	7	2	1	4	5	8	6	9

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Soup; 3 Stallion; 8 Mark; 9 Testator; 11 Night-dresses; 13 Ritual; 14 Instep; 17 Long drawn out; 20 On the set; 21 Able; 22 Parasite; 23 Leas. Down: 1 Seminary; 2 Upright; 4 Theory; 5 Latest news; 6 In the; 7 Norm; 10 Strangers; 12 Spotless; 15 Trouble; 16 Priest; 18 Otter; 19 Coop. QUICK - Across: 1 Rage; 3 Horrific; 8 Thus; 9 Distract; 11 Immeasurable; 13 Entice; 14 Attach; 17 Fall into line; 20 Shames; 21 Hard; 22 Entreaty; 23 Vend. Down: 1 Retained; 2 Gourmet; 4 Odious; 5 Retraction; 6 Frail; 7 Cite; 10 Calculable; 12 Shielded; 15 Agitate; 16 Infest; 18 Apart; 19 Isle.

Quiz

- 1. At the end of which war was the Treaty of Sevres?
- 2. Of which two countries, other than England, was Canute king?
- 3. In which Scottish region is Edinburgh?
- 4. For which Disney film did Elton John co-write an Oscar-winning soundtrack?
- 5. What does HIV stand for?
- 6. Whom did Josephine de Beauharnais marry in 1796?
- 7. Which unit of time may be synodic, sidereal or calendar?
- 8. Of which nationality was the composer Carl Nielsen?
- 9. Which Cabinet Minister is an ex-Cunard waiter?
- 10. Which of its four official languages is exclusive to Switzerland?

Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Rolls-Royce; 2 Marianas Trench; 3 Betel nut; 4 Esau; 5 Octopus; 6 IV; 7 North Sea; 8 Golden Fleece; 9 Dirk Bogarde; 10 Parrot.
- Niner: ABOLISHED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 498651 gives a girl's name,
- 49258 gives a second girl's name,
- 437 gives a third girl's name.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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A must-see – Ashton Memorial with its imposing steps and views



The lap of luxury – a suite at Lancaster House



Lancaster House is an elegant hotel

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WHILE I may have known it was going to happen I must confess my heart sank more than a little when the map took us off the M6 and in a different direction from the sign inviting us to The Lakes.

It was a little bit like boarding a plane and being told to turn right by a flight attendant when you have a hankering to be diverted left to the quails' eggs, head massage and free fizz of business class above the elbow in the face of standard.

But Lancaster, where we were headed, turned out to be anything but standard and Lancaster House the absolute lap of luxury.

The hotel is part of the English Lakes Resorts and Venues chain located in the north west, which is well-regarded by the industry

By Sarah Cowen-Strong

and visitors alike. You may not have a lake on the doorstep or a mountain peak visible from the ensuite but you can certainly enjoy a flavour of the area from this 99-room delight. As well as friendly northern hospitality, there's a host of local delicacies to try created by head chef Damien Ng who has been at the helm for five years and has devised a menu that celebrates the best of nearby produce – and the freshest of ingredients – all sourced from within 25 miles of the hotel. We were spoilt for choice.

How could we resist the Port of Lancaster Smoke House Platter, with its offerings of smoked trout, lemon and parsley mackerel, smoked salmon, and pork and black pudding sausage with horseradish mayonnaise?

How could we say no to the Lancashire Hot Pot with its rich yet never-greasy

confections of meat and vegetables? This modern and elegant hotel was bustling with visitors of all ages when we were there. Hikers and walkers relaxed cheek by jowl with holidaymakers lapping up the plush sofas and the magnificence of the Minstrel's Gallery.

Award

The hotel, which has won an award for its installation of 300 solar panels, has the tempting Sandpiper Leisure Club. As well as gym equipment and a beauty salon it has a swimming pool and an outside whirlpool bath. Step back inside the main body of the hotel and team this experience with a couple of chilled glasses of Prosecco from the bar and you can't help but smile.

Those who were using the hotel as a touring base had done their homework. It's near enough to the sights but far enough away

to retain a sense of serenity. In some Lakeside towns the pavements are so full. Not so in Lancaster. It doesn't attract swarms of day-trippers but has history and colour in abundance.

Being a university city it has plenty of pubs, bars, clubs and coffee shops. You could take a tour of the town's Lancaster Brewery or put yourself into expert hands for a tour of Lancaster Castle, which until 2011 also operated as a prison.

Raise your eyes to the skies and you see the Grade I listed Ashton Memorial which is 150ft tall and is visible for miles around. The folly was commissioned by Lord James Ashton in memory of his late wife and, with its imposing steps and views, is a must-see.

Lancaster is a true gem. It has a charisma of its own yet is on the doorstep of a host of attractions and the Lakes are just up the motorway.



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Experts working on behalf of the business have already visited Israel to the fish farms of Maagan and Kfar Rupin and selected a large number of koi, goldfish and shubunkins.

There have been new shipments of UK bred golden and blue orfe from a local supplier and sturgeon from Europe to complete the range.

Koi manager Dennis Wordworth is due to visit Japan in April to purchase a selection of the popular fish to suit everyone from the novice to the koi connoisseur.

In addition, there is a large selection of marginal plants and lilies ready for introduction into your pond from the same local supplier the business has dealt with since it began in 1982.

Throughout the winter sales are mostly of tropical and marine fish and equipment with the Clear range of



A large range of fish is available aquariums from China being a major part of this.

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Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer.
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

KIND HOMES WANTED
TARKA 10yr golden small lakeland terrier cross
GEORGE Gentle border collie, kind gentle, quiet home wanted
ZIGGY 12yr old patterdale cross, nice chap, suit pensioner
CHOPS white 2yr staffie, lovely boy, affectionate, loves to play
SALLY 6yr red/white border collie
POPPY 14wk blue merle border collie girl
ARCHIE 10mth black white border collie, lovely nature
01588 676106
www.dogsamaritans.org.uk

ROSIE
Is an 11 year old chocolate coloured German Pointer. Her owners moved abroad. She is friendly, affection and a gentle girl who is good with children and other dogs. She is well behaved, loves the car, her food and cuddles. At the moment she is in a foster home.
For more information
telephone 01588 640932.
Also other dogs:
www.dogsamaritans.org.uk

BORDER TERRIER cross Shih tzu puppy, 8 months, female, reluctant sale. £300. 01384 385870.
MINIATURE PEDIGREE Chihuahua, female, multi coloured, all injections. £252. 07592 477308.

vets

Express & Star

THIS SPACE COULD BE PROMOTING YOUR BUSINESS

Every day our customers get a great response from Classified Advertising.

So could you by calling our friendly experienced Sales Advisors on 01902 319191.

5 Business & Farming
business opportunities
READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering any obligations.

6 Property
accommodation to let

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the introduction of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

DUDLEY AREA
Nice one bed flat to let. CH, fitted kitchen. Including Gas, Electric, Council tax and Water. No DSS.
Telephone 07803 890908.

GORNAL AREA high quality self contained furnished studio flat, suit mature single person. DSS considered. 01384 821363.

SMART ROOMS in shared house. Netherton, from £85 pwk Single. £95 pwk DBL inc bills. No DSS. 07970 717139.

TIPTON 1 bed Flat also Bedsits available. DSS may be considered. 07572 144637 or 07961 301577.

TIPTON/DUDLEY PORT one bed ground floor flat. DSS considered. Call/Txt. 07779 615293.

mobile homes

LOOK
ONE BEDROOM BRAND NEW LUXURY PARK HOME
On select country park in Coven.
Nice gardens, GCH, DG. Private parking on new driveway, canal walks, nice views.
Semi retired / retired only.
£59,500.
Call 07971 307903.
LOOK

properties wanted

WE PAY 100% of purchase price

EVERY TIME!



We buy any house

- FAMILY BUSINESS
- FAST FRIENDLY SERVICE
- COMPLETION TO SUIT YOU
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WE ALSO BUY LAND

30 yrs

0800 999 999 6

or 01902 628047 24/7

www.black-countryhomes.co.uk

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FREEPHONE

Friendly, local company here to help you 7 days a week. Est. 10 years.

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Home Cash Buyer

Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish

£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££

Houses / Land Required

Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**

Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154

Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049

Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901

www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

PROPERTIES WANTED

- ✓ Any area
- ✓ Any circumstances
- ✓ Any condition

Direct Sale | No Chains | No Stress

Fast CASH completion

Call Jack on **07507 865668**

overseas property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

7

Jobs

full time - general

Recruitment Open Days

Due to expansion we are recruiting for Residential Child Care Workers and Teaching Assistants. If you have the skills to give children and young people a brighter future then bring along your CV to one of our open days to meet the team.

Saturday 2nd April 2016 from 10:00am - 4:00pm at Horizon Care, 12 Prospect Park, Longford Road, Cannock, WS11 0LG.

Wednesday 6th April 2016 from 10:00am - 7:00pm at Bloomfield School, Bloomfield Road, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 9ER.

Full and part time contracts available. Various shift patterns, 24 hours shifts, 42 hours per week available on a rota basis, including Waking Nights and Bank work.

Great rates of pay, full training and Development, annual reward and recognition scheme.

If you would like more information please email recruitment@horizoncare.co.uk or telephone 01543 570304.

horizon

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MORE CLASSIFICATIONS
MORE CHOICE**

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ClassifiedAds

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Claim your FREE business listing today!!!

Visit: directory.expressandstar.co.uk

Powered by **scoop**

Express & Star

**Are you customer focussed?
Want to progress into sales?**

MNA Media

The MNA, publishers of the Express & Star and Shropshire Star, is looking for talented people to join our sales teams across the West Midlands and Shropshire. The role involves advising and selling response focussed advertising solutions to a diverse range of businesses across our newspaper and digital portfolio.

Key responsibilities and skills should ideally include:

- The ability to develop a firm business relationship with customers
- Be able to generate new business
- The desire to exceed minimum sales targets
- Be creative and articulate
- Be able to identify the best advertising opportunities that will enhance a customer's marketing response.

You will already have a proven track record in sales, or have high levels of customer service skills. However, if you feel you have an outgoing and friendly personality and would like the opportunity to move into a fast paced business, then we can train you to succeed in the role.

Once fully qualified, you can expect to earn a good basic salary and an attractive OTE potential. Benefits include a company car for Field Sales, five weeks paid holiday, full training and ongoing side by side coaching. There are good career prospects for the right candidates to progress through to Senior Sales Consultants within the team.

Please send your C.V., along with a covering letter to:

Personnel Department
Midland News Association
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 1ES

Or apply by email to: hr@mnamedia.co.uk

Closing date: 24th March 2016.



Owners of Express & Star Ltd and Shropshire Newspapers Ltd

Express & Star **STAR**

MNA Media

COMMUNICATIONS

EXECUTIVE

The Midland News Association, publisher of the Express & Star and Shropshire Star, is seeking a creative and motivated individual to deliver communications both internally and externally.

The successful candidate will play a key role in the positive promotion of the company, its portfolio of successful print and digital titles, as well as the colleagues who work here.

Candidates with up to three years' experience from PR/communications backgrounds, especially those with digital and internal comms experience, are of particular interest.

Part of a growing team, this is a varied role covering all aspects of the communications mix.

Around 50% of the role will be focused on delivering internal communications through the intranet, staff events and other activity.

The other 50% will be focused on producing effective external content including offline, digital and PR.

Working in a news publishing environment, you will need to demonstrate excellent writing and editing skills. The successful candidate will also be able to build and maintain strong relationships within the company and with contacts at partner organisations.

We would like to hear from candidates with experience of delivering effective digital communications.

This is an exciting opportunity to join a team which has made significant progress in improving communications over the last four years.

Salary:

Up to £22,000

Please send your CV along with a covering letter to:

HR Department,
Midland News Association,
51-53 Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Or apply by email to:
hr@mnamedia.co.uk

Closing date:
Friday April 8

8

Motoring

cars over £1500

BMW 530 DIESEL, M Sport, 06 reg, fully loaded, 19in upgrade wheels, lady owner, lovely condition, £6,500 o.n.o. 01384 350369.

SELLING YOUR CAR?

We have a package to suit every budget.

Packages start from as little as

£21.00 for 6 nights

Plus
6 nights free if you do not sell.

CALL

01902 317878

CITROEN C1 VIBE, 2008, black, 3 door, 2 keys, MOT September, £20 tax, 60,000 miles, very good condition, £2,100. 07837 686915.

FORD KA
2010, 17,000 miles, silver, abs, air bag, fsh, alarm, long Mot, metallic paint, pas, stereo, CD, family car.
£3,150 ono.
07913 792513.

KIA PICANTO 2010, 4dr, 1.1, low tax, £3,250.
Call for details. 01384 70821.

Owners of Express & Star Ltd and Shropshire Newspapers Ltd

Express & Star **STAR**

LANDROVER DISCOVERY TD5, 2000, full MoT, all new tyres, very clean, 118k, £3,000 or PX for Van. 01952 461757 / 07890 806028.

LANDROVER FREELANDER SE TD4, 2005, blue, 63,000 miles, MoT June, excellent condition. £9,200. 01902 732041.

MERCEDES SMART CAR (06) 44, Two tone blue / silver, Panoramic sunroof, Automatic, Petrol, 65,000 miles. FSH. £2,350. 07966 299746.

PEUGEOT 307 06 reg, 2 owners from new, FSH, full MoT, excellent condition. £2,450 ono. 01384 373999 / 07527 592477.



PORSCHE BOXSTER

2004, 64,000 miles, MoT'd, excellent condition.

£6,950.

01743 761896 or

07778 964431.

RENAULT CLIO Dynamique, 59 plate, 5-dr hatch, MoT, 33,000 miles, excellent condition, must be seen, £4,495 ono. 01902 782958.

RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE, 2010, 55,400 miles, silver, air con, MoT, cruise control, alloys, £4,600. 01902 892549.

VAUXHALL ASTRA Manual 5dr hatchback, Exclusive CDTi, 17cc, 2010, diesel, black, 76,000 miles, 6 speed gear box, only £30 tax, air con, cruise control and all other mod cons, good condition. £4,300 ono. 07843 745278.

VAUXHALL INSIGNIA hatchback, SRi, 60 plate, 1800 Ecotec petrol engine, 34,000 miles, FSH, immaculate. £5,500. 01902 765739.

VW PASSAT 1.9 TD SALOON 2006. Above average condition. Dealer FSH. Reluctant genuine sale. First to see will buy. £3,000 ono. 01384 621507 / 07535 696469.

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

CHEVROLET MATIZ FLAIR, 2008, 41,472 miles, silver, fsh, long MoT, central locking, sunroof, alloys, good condition. £1,250 ono. 01384 381644.

FORD FIESTA, 2005, 11 months MoT, blue, excellent condition inside and out. £795. 07498 131071.

FORD FIESTA, blue 1999, 10 months MoT, 75,000 miles, very reliable, £550. 01384 573502.

FORD KA 1.3, 2001, long MoT, excellent runner, fully loaded, 95,000 miles, any trial, very clean car, £375. 07540 474922.

FORD KA, 2007, 66,000 miles, silver, MoT, metallic paint, pas, Bluetooth stereo, ideal first car, very good condition, must be seen, £1,250. 07500 839010.

HONDA ACCORD V-tec Sport, blue, 1.8, 4dr, MoT July 2016, 131k, excellent condition, £950 ono. 07930 374988.

MGF VXC 1998, 2 keys and fobs, blue, some SH, Panasonic CD, wheels refurbished, 81k, 12 months MoT, £1,450 ono. 07758 827185.

MINI COOPER 02 reg, black with white roof and mirrors, MoT Feb 2017, clean condition, drives well. £1,500. Call 07512 095618.

PEUGEOT 206 SW, 53 plate petrol, 1997cc, 64,000 miles, £450 ono. 07902 417713.

PEUGEOT 206 SW, 53 plate petrol, 1997cc, 64,000 miles, £450 ono. 07802 417713.

PEUGEOT 206 W reg, no MoT, spares or repair. Good runner. £39. 01902 751604.

RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE, 70k, Full MoT, 03. Usual extras. Beautiful condition. £750. o.n.o. 01384 440258 or 07935 337167.

ROVER 25 2004, MoT, family owned from new, head gasket and belts done, very reliable, clean and looked after, £525. 07931 356797.

ROVER 45 MoT, 53 reg, good condition. £475 ono. 07804 853287.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4 2001, silver, RCL, CD, good condition, MoT, £400 ono. 07813 932880.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6, 1998, good condition, MoT till January, red, £200. Call after 3.30pm 07855 043992.

VW POLO 1.4 CL, 1997, 1 year MoT, PAS, EWM, E/M. Lady owner. Drives very well. £255. 07570 466779.

classic cars

MG MIDGET 1500 Long MoT, recent respray and new hood, lots of new parts, over £1500 spent, Reduced price to £1,999. Telephone 01384 74272.

WANTED, CLASSIC Cars. Private cash buyer. Instant cash settlement. Any age, any condition. 01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

driving tuition

Homer's
10 Hours £291 Five Hours £201
10 Hours £201 All Areas Covered
AD/PO REQUIRED. Gift vouchers available for £10
07432 458100 / 01562 870050
01384 234954 / 0121 5640090
01902 580065 homerdrivingtutor.co.uk

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

MCB
TOP PRICES PAID FOR ALL SCRAP CARS, VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS
Tel: 01902 408176
1000's of parts available at all times
MONMORE RD. WV1 2TZ

ABC AUTO SALVAGE WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or 0121 557 0400. Evening 07813 184611 Oldbury Area.

vehicles wanted

alan reed cars
Used cars wanted for cash
Top prices paid. HP settled.
Buyer could call.
01562 711083 / 07831 245313

CHEAP RUN ABOUT WANTED
Must be reliable with MoT, anything considered. 07754 121452.

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, 01902 597035.

spares & accessories

tyres / wheels / exhausts

BMW Z4 alloy wheel with a new tyre, 225 x 45 x 17. Excellent condition. £75 ono. 07950 637678.

BMW Z4 alloy wheel with a new tyre, 225 x 45 x 17. Excellent condition. £75 ono. 07950 637678.

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to
Marie Hogg on 01902 713146
or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk
(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

PHILLIS MARY ROGERS-WICKS (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above mentioned deceased, late of 21 Slims Gate Halesowen West Midlands B63 4AX, who died on 28/05/2015, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned 'Solicitors on or before 25/05/2016, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
THOMAS HORTON LLP
Strand House 70 The Strand
Bromsgrove B61 8DQ

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
The Borough Council of Sandwell (Sidaway Street, Cradley Heath) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2016, intends to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Sidaway Street, Cradley Heath from the junction with Mace Street. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 22/04/16, effective from 01/04/16. Traffic will be diverted via Clarendon Street, Trinity Street and Mace Street and vice-versa. Purpose – works to gas main.
The Borough Council of Sandwell (Bredon Road, Oldbury) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2016, intends to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Bredon Road, Oldbury from the junction with Martley Road to Badsey Road. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 13/05/16, effective from 07/04/16. Traffic will be diverted via Martley Road, Badsey Road and vice-versa. Purpose – facilitate works to gas main.
The Borough Council of Sandwell (High Street, Smethwick) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2016, intends to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along High Street, Smethwick between Stony Lane and Trinity Street. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 10/04/16, effective from 04/04/16. Traffic will be diverted via Stony Lane, Londonderry Lane, Coopers Lane, High Street and vice-versa. Purpose – repair works to a water main.

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Toll End Road, Tipton) (Temporary One Way) Order 2016, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Toll End Road, Tipton from its junction with Horseley Road. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 08/04/16, effective from 25/03/16. Traffic will be diverted via Horseley Road and Bridge Road. Purpose – works to gas main.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Wrights Lane, Cradley Heath) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2016, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Wrights Lane, Cradley Heath from the junction with Cherry Orchard. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 08/04/16, effective from 25/03/16. Traffic will be diverted via Station Road, Heathfield Way, Highgate Street and vice-versa. Purpose – works to the gas main.

10 Personals

general

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

HOME HELP required, in Darlaston area, not caring.
Telephone 01902 334541.

personal

A 49 YEAR OLD MALE
Hardworking, loves the outdoor life, Country pubs, Country walks and is an animal lover, Seeking genuine female 45-50, for friendship.
Box Number P20270, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

AT MANYANA Gentlemen's Club, 5* customer rated-Mon-Fri 10-9pm, Sat-Sun: 10-11pm. 0121 472 7281.

ATTRACTIVE GENTLEMAN AGE 39
From West Bromwich area. Easy going, laid back, WLTM nice lady, aged from 35-50 for long term relationship. Photograph appreciated and returned.
Box Number P20276, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

FIT FRIENDLY GUY, 70
Would like to meet lady, any age, non smoker, to wine and dine, to put some fun back into life.
Photo appreciated and returned.
Please write to **Box Number P20280, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.**

GENTLEMAN IS SEEKING A GENUINE LADY 50-67 OR SINGLE MOTHER
My qualities, loyal, sincere, passionate, understanding, well dressed, well mannered, GSOH, creative writer, 5ft 6, very loving, understanding, spontaneous and adventurous.
LTR only.
Same qualities
Box Number P20275, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

PENN COLTS U'10s SOUTH
Are looking for Defenders / Mid-fielders to strengthen their all ready successful squad.
Contact Matt Ford on 07540 318556.

Penn Colts 5-a side tournament, July 2, 3.
Visit www.penncolts.co.uk for application form

GENUINE HONEST
Easy going tall, slim 54 year old male, no ties, no baggage, looking for a slim genuine, honest female who's looking for someone decent in their lives.
Box Number P20273, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

WELL OFF WIDOWER 60's
Would like to meet genuine lady, for friendship, holidays and days out.
Between 54 - 64.
Leading to long term relationship.
Box Number P20277, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

WIDOW, BLONDE LADY
Well dressed, looking for friendship, maybe more, with a smart genuine gentleman aged 58-68 for outings, holidays etc. Photo if possible will be returned.
Box Number P20278, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

WIDOWER
Own house and car, loves music and dancing, holidays in UK and abroad.
Would like a relationship with lady with similar interests, aged 60 to early 70's. I have a lot of love to give to the right lady.
Box Number P20271, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

sports clubs

BUY LOCAL SELL LOCAL
01902 317878

BUY LOCAL SELL LOCAL
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Classified Ads

Star Reader Travel
Hand picked holidays with you in mind

For more information or for brochures contact the Express & Star Promotions Team
Telephone: 01902 319999
Opening times: Mon to Fri, 9am-5pm
Online www.starreadertravel.com

London Theatre



Omega Holidays offer a superb portfolio of theatre breaks, managing the whole show package which includes travel, either by coach or rail, four-star accommodation and various price bands for each show. Make your own way breaks are also available to book.

Rail inclusive breaks – Two days

Saturday Night Theatre from £169⁹⁵

Catch the Theatre Express and enjoy a super two-day weekend break in the capital.

There's a selection of London hotels to choose from (supplements may apply) and rail travel is standard class with the option to upgrade. Departs Saturday from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton, returning on Sunday.

The ticket is for the Saturday evening.

Rail inclusive breaks – Three days

Theatre Showstopper from £239⁹⁵

This popular package to the West End departs from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton on the Friday returning on Sunday.

Standard class travel is included with the option to upgrade, plus two nights stay at a four-star London hotel (supplements may apply).

Includes a top priced ticket for a Friday evening performance.

Coach inclusive breaks – Two days

Saturday Night from £149⁹⁵

Theatre Weekend with Dinner from £159⁹⁵

Both breaks include a standard priced theatre ticket (option to upgrade) and an overnight stay in an outer London hotel.

For the Theatre Weekend with Dinner option see the matinee performance before heading to the hotel for an evening meal, whereas the Saturday Night option is for the evening performance (meal not included).

Price includes:

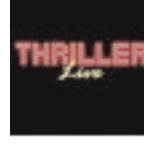
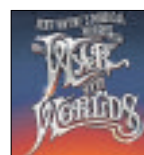
- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ One or two nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- ✓ Evening meal (with certain packages)
- ✓ Free time in London
- ✓ Services of a tour driver
- ✓ Single rooms subject to availability (supplement applies)

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)

Prices are per person (unless otherwise stated). Please read brochures/web pages for full description plus terms and conditions. Please note Star Reader Travel are unable to take bookings. Dates subject to availability. Coach pick up points offered: Dudley, Shrewsbury, Telford, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

"The 'from' price and price bands vary for each show — see brochure/web page for details.

DAYS: 2 OR 3 DEPARTS: VARIOUS DATES



Power boost in winner

By Matt Kimberley

In the history of mid-life updates, this is possibly the smallest you'll ever have seen. No cosmetic revisions here – not even new alloy wheel designs. The only mechanical difference is a new exhaust system with lower back pressure and a 5.8kg weight saving.

Performance-wise, you'll have noticed the name is now Cupra 290, and true to form it has 10bhp more than the old one.

A tweak in the engine management software delivers the nominal extra go, which comes hand-in-hand with a wider peak torque band. The full 258lb/ft is now put down between 1,700rpm and 5,800rpm; 50 and 500rpm improvements at either end.

There's also Full Link phone-pairing software, so whatever your phone, it should hook up to the system with a degree of internet connectivity.

Nothing changes with the appearance because Seat has hit on a winning formula. The Leon is its best-selling car, and it's the first real international sales barnstormer the company has had this decade. It ain't broke, so there's no point fixing it. The change is the boot badge upgrade, to Cupra 290.

From right now you can get the 290 in three-door (and, most lovely) SC, do-it-all five-door hatch and more practical ST estate shapes. The ST has a couple of hundred litres more boot space than the 380-litre tub shared by the other two. There's adequate rear legroom for passengers but it's not the airiest place for them to be. If there was a

black mark it would be on the white seat trim, because it's the sort of thing that will get dirty all too easily.

Seat hasn't taken the chance to enliven the cabin, so it stays one of the least imaginative in the hot hatch clique. The seats might be well-shaped and supportive, but a few Cupra logos and a flat-bottomed steering wheel aren't really enough any more.

But ... hit the road and that's forgotten. The free-revving 2.0-litre engine masters everyday driving with barely 20 per cent of its ability. Use a bit more right boot and fast turbo response gives you astonishing overtaking punch. Keep the throttle pinned on your friendly local private airfield and it'll get to the 155mph limiter with ease. It's a monster.

It also sounds better. That new exhaust gives it more of a growl both inside and outside the car, and, unless I was dreaming, it's a bit louder, too. Both good things.

It changes direction like a rogue firework, even under power, if you're skilled enough to handle it that way. The VAQ slip-limiting system is as good now as it always was – i.e. superb. Be aware, though, it's much firmer on the track-biased Michelin Pilot Cup 2 tyres, which you can add as options. The standard Continentals are much more forgiving.

With the Cupra 265 confined to the bin (almost no one bought one), the entry point is now the full-fat and beautiful SC. The highest-spec Focus ST is more than £2,000 cheaper (before haggling), but it's not as accomplished a motor. On the other hand, a Civic Type R is more expensive and you get less equipment to show for it. The Leon could be a bit better equipped, as evidenced by the now-huge options list, but everything you really want is on the car already. In terms of value, it splits the pack, but it depends what each buyer is actually looking or hoping for.



.....
If this car was a:
Power Ranger it would
be the red one. It's an
all-rounder, a leader
and boy does it have
some skills
.....

The flagship Cupra still isn't that common a sight in the UK, but owners are the type who exchange a nod and a wave. It's like a secret shared between two strangers: it's a hell of a car, and those who've bought one know exactly why.

The Cupra 290, like the 280 before it, is part of modern hot hatch legend – if only within the scene itself.

This car summed up in a single word: Mighty

If this car was a: Power Ranger it would be the red one. It's an all-rounder, a leader and boy does it have some skills.

TESTED

Seat Leon Cupra 290, from £28,375

Engine: 2.0-litre turbocharged petrol producing 286bhp and 258lb/ft

Transmission: Six-speed manual driving the front wheels

Performance: Top speed 155mph, 0-62mph in 5.6 seconds (SC)

Economy: 40.4mpg combined
Emissions: 164g/km





Way of Life!

SWIFT SZ-L

0% APR

REPRESENTATIVE

PAY NO DEPOSIT AND ONLY £178 PER MONTH (PLUS FINAL REPAYMENT)

With its standout design, the Swift SZ-L is hard to miss. Its light, agile chassis works with responsive steering for handling that's nothing but fun. With top-class safety, low running costs and head turning curves, you really must see one.

Contact Halesowen Motor House today



HAVE TO have it.

Halesowen Motor House is a credit broker and not a lender

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Astra Sports Tourer now in showrooms

The new Astra Sports Tourer is now on sale priced from £16,585 on-the-road, with first cars arriving in Vauxhall showrooms this March after its global debut at the 2015 Frankfurt Motor Show.

One of the UK's top-selling and best-loved cars, Astra is a household name for British car buyers with almost three million sold in the UK over the last 36 years, including 50,000 in the last 12 months. More than 25 per cent of British motorists have either owned or driven an Astra, so reaction to a new model will always be felt across the market.

The Astra Sports Tourer is based on an all-new lightweight vehicle architecture with a new design, powertrains and technology. It is built at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port plant in Cheshire. It is the only plant to build this body style.

The Sports Tourer has proved a popular car in the UK market, with sales making it the third most popular estate car sold in 2015 with key rivals including the Ford Focus Estate and the Volkswagen Golf Estate. With a fleet/retail sales split of 80:20, it holds great appeal as a company car, taking drivers from their daily commute to weekend activities. The Sports Tourer will also appeal to private buyers who are looking for a practical family car.

Vauxhall's all-new Astra and Astra Sports Tourer have secured 2,000 jobs at the Ellesmere Port manufacturing plant in Cheshire after workers won a long-term contract and a £140 million investment from GM.

UK firms, including those in manufacturing, utilities, construction, transportation and storage, benefit from approaching £70 million gross value added that results directly from Vauxhall's investment in Ellesmere Port (source: Centre for Economics and Business Research).

And this great British success story doesn't end there. The Astra range was designed by a team led by Brits Mark Adams and Malcom Ward. In his role as Vauxhall/Opel's design director, Ward follows in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather who both worked at Vauxhall.

Also looking forward to a bright future is Vauxhall's other UK manufacturing plant, Britain's leading commercial vehicle plant, located in Luton, where the Vivaro van is produced. Workers in Luton won a similar long term contract to their colleagues at Ellesmere Port. Their agreement runs for 10 years after a £125 million investment that secured 1,500 jobs.

The latest generation Sports Tourer has almost the same dimensions as the outgoing model. While the driver can enjoy 26 millimetres of additional headroom, passengers in the rear have 28 millimetres more legroom. The new Astra Sports Tourer can take up to three child seats in the rear and can also carry up to 1,630 litres of luggage thanks to the efficient packaging.

Inside, gracefully sculpted shapes are combined with premium materials and functional clarity. Switches and controls are reduced to an absolute minimum, supporting the efficiency and ease of use that is at the core of the Astra. The centrepiece of the new Astra's interior is the award-winning IntelliLink system. The location of the system was carefully selected to ensure both an ideal view of the display as well as easy reach and use.

Lightweight

The Sports Tourer is based on an all-new lightweight architecture. Its body is more lithe and aerodynamic and is also driven by powerful, weight-optimised engines. The new Astra Sports Tourer is up to 190kg lighter than its predecessor. It is the most aerodynamically efficient estate car built by Vauxhall with a co-efficient drag-value of 0.272 making it as streamlined as the five-door variant.

The bodyshell and structure alone are around 85kg lighter. High-strength and ultra-high-strength lightweight steels, more compact subframes as well as modification to the front and rear suspension all contributed to this result. Further size and mass-optimisation measures include shorter front and rear overhangs, an exhaust system that is up to 25 per cent lighter and smaller wheels and tyres that weigh up to 11.5kg less. The brake system has less mass to decelerate, making a more compact design possible (weighing 10kg less) while delivering even better braking performance.

Another plus on the efficiency side is the latest-generation Vauxhall engines. They distinguish themselves with their compact and ultra-efficient design: for instance, the new 1.4 ECOTEC Direct Injection Turbo engine now weighs less. Its aluminum engine block alone is 10kg lighter than the cast-iron block of its predecessor.

Reduced weight also leads to noticeably higher agility while saving fuel and CO2 emissions. The Sports Tourer with the 1.0-litre Turbo and Easytronic 3.0 combination is an economical and clean high-tech petrol engine. The engine portfolio has helped boost efficiency with outputs ranging from 110PS to 200PS and fuel consumption and combined CO2 emissions of up to 83.1mpg and 89g/km respectively.

For the first time on a Vauxhall, the tailgate can be opened without a touch or a remote control. In order to improve loading space the Sports Tourer Elite model comes with 40/20/40 foldable rear seats enabling even more flexible loading space configurations. The FlexOrganiser product range with side rails, dividing nets and various fastening options is available as an option so that all loaded materials can be stored safely and tidily.



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- front & rear parking sensors with reversing camera

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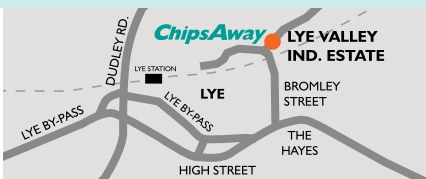
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DRIVETIME

Internet of cars

There is much hype about how cars are becoming more connected to the internet and smartphones, but this is not the only future for the car.

Almost every car maker now talks about how connected their cars are, how easily they can pair with your smartphone and offer instant access to the internet and all of the functions on your phone. Handy as all this is, there is also a future where the car is not simply a glorified mobile phone carrier.

A future of connected cars has many upsides, as cars will be able to communicate their position to other vehicles and allow for some, or total, autonomous driving. This should help reduce collision rates and bring down serious injury and fatality numbers on our roads. There is also a future of instant traffic information, navigation and even the car checking itself in for a service having already told the garage what needs attention.

All of this is good progress, yet a connected car future is not all sweetness and light as there are consequences of allowing our vehicles to communicate with the world outside its windows.

For starters, there are already concerns about the security of vehicles that have an internet connection.

There have been a small number of instances where connected cars have been 'hacked' so the driver does not have control of the vehicle. The outcome of this scenario is a car could be maliciously controlled with the driver in it or unlocked, started and stolen without the need for a key.

It's estimated that 89,000 cars in London in 2013 were stolen using electronic hacking, so this is a problem already afflicting car owners.

Another downside of cars becoming more connected and being able to book themselves in for a service without you having to lift a phone or tap a keyboard, is cost. A car with more technology fitted is going to cost more than one without, so the price you pay up front to buy or lease a car will be greater.

More costs will come in replacing any component that is connected to the car's onboard monitoring, as every part will require a sensor. Add complexity to a component and it rises in price to manufacture and fit a replacement. In a worst-case scenario, cars could fail MoT tests or even be scrapped because a sensor has failed and it's too expensive to replace even if the car otherwise drives perfectly well.



Connected cars also open up a debate about privacy and civil liberty. If a car is connected to the internet, it can easily be monitored for position and speed. This could mean any driver parking illegally or breaking the speed limit by even the slimmest margin could be automatically fined.

Insurance companies might also impose stricter usage conditions that can then be monitored 24-hours a day, which could be good news for those seeking to lower their premiums. However, how much information will be shared with insurance companies, council parking attendants and the police?

Car companies and governments are working to establish these guidelines, but don't expect the car to become little more than a big mobile phone too soon.

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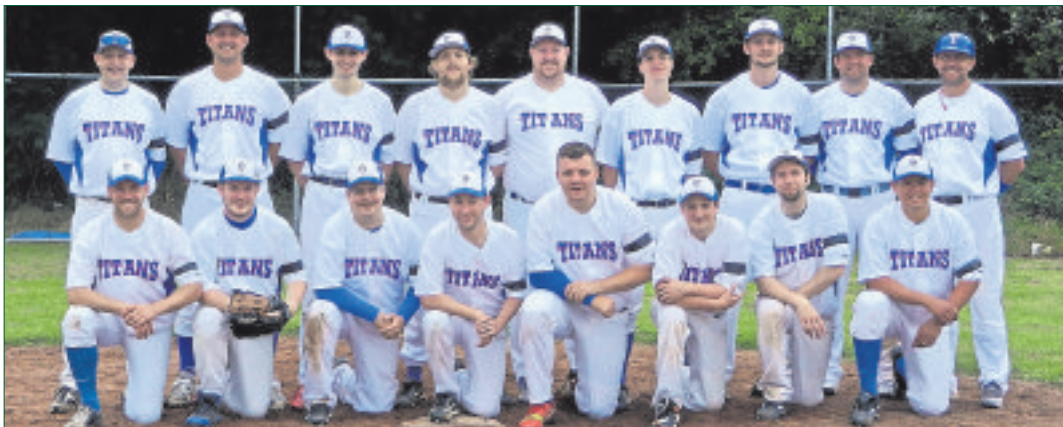
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Stourbridge Titans are looking to build on their success in the third tier of the British Baseball Federation



Alan Jones, catcher and number 2 in the order, gets in some practice



Titans player Alex Darby, second base



Big-hitting from Titans during training

Big-hitting baseball Titans pitching in for a brighter future

STOURBRIDGE Titans baseball club are looking to build on their success story by catching the next generation of stars.

The Titans have made impressive progress since realising their dream to form a club five years ago. They now compete in the British Baseball Federation AA Central Division.

Shaun Healy, Corey Millard and Samantha Smith were the founder members who got the ball rolling in 2011. And after a testing couple of seasons the Titans have excelled on the field, winning the league title in 2014 and finishing runners-up last year.

They now boast a senior squad of up to 25 players and are looking to the future as baseball grows in popularity this side of the Atlantic.

"The founders of the club were Shaun, Corey, Samantha," said secretary Stuart Walton, who traded bowling off-spin for Coseley Cricket Club for a shot at pitching with the Titans.

Diamond

"They all played at the start and Shaun and Corey still do now.

They used to play for Birmingham Bandits, but they were travelling a long way because they lived in Stourbridge. So they said 'right, we want to start a new club of our own'. And so they started the club at Thorns Community College which is where we are based.

"We had one of the old playing fields and we built everything ourselves, an 18ft high back-stop, the diamond, everything. It was the whole Field of Dreams - if you build it they will come. Then it was a question of recruiting players. I think it was one of the first to join up.

SPORTING FEATURE

By Nick Elwell

"We had one of the old playing fields and we built everything ourselves. It was the whole Field of Dreams - if you build it they will come."

"I used to play cricket and I had an interest in baseball. But I was never going to get any further at cricket and I got more of a buzz from playing a new sport.

"I was enjoying the fact that it was something new and that I was learning new things."

Walton is now keen for other people to enjoy that buzz, especially youngsters keen to try a new sport and chase a possible Olympic dream.

"One of the things we are really trying to do is develop a youth team," he said.

"We started Junior Titans towards the end of last year to try to get more kids involved in the game from around our area.

"We were focused on getting the field ready and building the senior team and our next focus is getting the youth team together. We need to keep the club alive.

"Baseball is going to be seriously considered for the 2020 Olympics. That won't be decided until this August, but it looks very likely. The Olympics are in Japan and it's Japan's national

sport. In four years time you could actually be an Olympian and playing for the GB team."

No prior knowledge of baseball is required to play the sport with Titans well-stocked with coaches and kit to help newcomers learn the ropes.

"We have one guy who is from America who played at high school when he was in America but everyone else started from scratch," Walton said. "One of the big things we need to do is to raise awareness. Most people don't even realise baseball is played in this country, never mind that there is a side in Stourbridge," he added.

Titans compete in the third tier of the British Baseball Federation set up with the new season starting in April.

Birmingham Bandits, Long Eaton Storm, Nottingham Rebels, Leicester Blue Sox and Milton Keynes Bucks are their league rivals with matches played on Sundays on a double-header basis.

Travelling

"We play double-headers over seven innings to cut down on the travelling," added Walton.

"If you get out, then another eight batters later you are in again. Your day is not ruined if you get out first ball.

"In cricket you can get out first ball and end up paying six quid for your tea to field for 50 overs. In baseball, if you get out it's not that big a deal because you get to bat again."

Anyone interested in joining the Titans, or going along for a taster session, should contact Stuart Walton on 07854 353335.

Training is on Sunday mornings during the winter at Thorns Community Centre, from 11.30am-1.30pm, and on Tuesdays from 6.30pm at the same venue during the season.



Coach Jeff Nash during training



First base and pitcher Karl Ensor

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Glassboys' hopes dealt major blow

Stourbridge 1 Ashton Utd 2

STOURBRIDGE suffered a severe setback to their play-off prospects home to promotion rivals Ashton despite early efforts by Glassboys strikers Karl Hawley and Justin Richards.

Chris Lait put Hawley clean through after eight minutes but the league's top marksman fired straight at Ashton 'keeper Paul Phillips. Then Richards miscued in front of goal.

On the 26th minute defender Dan Scarr robbed Ashton's Matty Chadwick when clean through on goal.

The match turned on 28 minutes when James Dean got goal side of Glassboys defender Stuart Pierpoint and went through only to be brought down by Pierpoint, who was sent off. Chris Baguley converted the penalty.

Stourbridge were forced to regroup, Lait being sacrificed for substitute defender Joe Hull. Despite being down to 10 men, Stourbridge still had a chance to claw themselves level when full back Kristian Green played through Hawley but the striker's shot lacked enough power to trouble Phillips.

Matters worsened on 42 minutes when Dean beat the offside trap to slot home past advancing Glassboys 'keeper Matthew Gould.

Stourbridge struggled to make any impact after the break as Ashton defended in depth at every opportunity. But Stour threw themselves a lifeline on 78 minutes when Matt Dodd crossed to the far post for Junior Smikle to smash home, but it was only to be consolation.

Workington 1 Stourbridge 1

Glassboys were held to a third straight league draw after taking a first-half lead through Sean Geddes' free-kick at fourth-placed Workington on Saturday. Then Stourbridge were pegged back by Joe McGee's header.

Triple swoop by cricket side to add strength in depth

HALESOWEN Cricket Club have made a triple swoop to bolster their playing ranks ahead of the new season.

It's a welcome return for former players Mark Fisher, back from Kidderminster, and Mohammed Shauib after a spell with neighbours Old Hill.

Charlie Tromans has also ended his self-imposed exile from the game, which lasted two seasons, to pledge his immediate future to the club.

Fisher is back at the club where he started out after ending last season with more than 330 runs under his belt and an average of 33.

Shauib averaged 38 and notched 612 runs in an Old Hill team which suffered relegation. Tromas is widely regarded as one of the most talented players to have come through the Halesowen ranks and his all-round ability will be a valuable asset.

Skipper Richard Brooker said: "We had a great finish to the season last year but there were times where we needed strength in depth in batting and by adding Mark, Shauib and Charlie we now have some quality to choose from."

Chairman's thanks as he steps down



Chairman Colin Brookes

COLIN Brookes has thanked supporters of Halesowen Town for their kind words after announcing he will step down as chairman at the end of the season.

The 74-year-old first began working for the Yeltz 21 years ago and spent 17 as general manager before being asked to become chairman in 2012.

A former professional, Brookes signed for Manchester United just months before the Munich air disaster but primarily made his name at Barnsley. He had played for the same England schoolboys

Halesowen Town

team as Nobby Stiles and also turned out for the likes of Albion and Peterborough.

After hanging up his boots, he became a policeman in the West Midlands before beginning work with Halesowen.

After the club secured their status in the Evo-Stik Premier Division on Saturday, Brookes felt the time was right to step down as chairman. "I have had 17 wonderful years as general manager and

another four fantastic years as chairman," Brookes said. "But I just feel the time is right to step down. I'm 74 years old and haven't got quite as much energy as I once had. It's sad to go but I have had many wonderful comments from supporters. I'd really like to say thanks."

Boss John Hill added: "It has been an absolute privilege to have Colin Brookes as my chairman."

On Saturday, Yeltz made it back-to-back away wins, beating Ilkeston Town 3-1, Kaiman Anderson scoring twice.

HALES LEFT IT JUST TOO LATE

Lichfield 27 Old Halesonians 24

OLD Hales first team travelled to Lichfield in an effort to grasp a play-off position.

The target looked doubtful given the points difference with Scunthorpe in second and Hinckley in first.

After 10 minutes Lichfield broke free for an early try but forward pressure saw Hales skipper Rich Taylor drive over for an unconverted try to draw level.

Lichfield immediately came back for a try to regain the lead 10-5 and, although the visitors were stronger in the set scrum and forward play, scored again on 30 minutes to lead 15-5.

Strong defence by Tom Jordan, Max Macfarlane, Steve Leach and Owen Jones (who had replaced injured Tom King) steadied the Hales ship, while Ben Hughes, Ben Barkley and Macfarlane did their best to make ground. On 35 minutes Leach got over the line to pull the score back to 15-10 at half time.

The restart saw both sides trading scores with young Hales scrum half Jamie Keen and Dave Hadkiss producing plenty of ball. Handling was not precise enough and, in a game of small margins, errors were to be the difference.

On 50 minutes Lichfield breached the Hales defence to increase their lead to 20-10. Hales responded with Jones diving over for a try, converted by Hadkiss 20-17.

Again Lichfield came back - the strength was in their backs whilst Hales were dominant in the pack. Lichfield were jubilant as they crossed the line with a converted try to lead by ten points with 15 minutes to go but Hales were not out of it. On 77 minutes hooker Sam Jones drove over for a try converted by Hadkiss to pull back to 27-24 with just three minutes to go.

Last efforts by Jones, Barkley and Macfarlane made ground but time had run out and at the final whistle the home side were victorious with Hales getting the consolation of two bonus points for four tries and a losing bonus.

Hales will have a break this Saturday then meet Longton at home on April 2 at 3 pm.

Old Hales 2nds should have played Old Patesians 2nds but they cried off late - so Old Hales 2nds arranged a friendly at Bridgnorth which saw them beat Bridgnorth 2nds 5-12.

Tennis ace shows Cajun class



Jordanne Whiley in action at the Cajun Classic in Baton Rouge, Louisiana Photo: William Greiner

HALESOWEN'S Jordanne Whiley clinched her second singles title of 2016 - and the fourth ITF 1 Series singles title of her career - when she beat Dutch top seed and world No.3 Aniek van Koot in the women's singles final at the Cajun Classic in Baton Rouge. World No.4 and second seed Whiley claimed her first singles title at the Louisiana tournament on Sunday after

beating van Koot 7-6 (7), 6-1 for her fourth career win over the former world No.1.

"I'm really happy with my performance this week, especially as I'm coming back from injury. I've been working on some new stuff at home and this just shows its paying off! I can't wait now for South Africa in two weeks' time", said Whiley after winning one of two titles in Baton Rouge for

Brits on the Tennis Foundation's Wheelchair Tennis World Class Programme.

Whiley ended the event with four straight sets wins, three of them coming against fellow world top 10 ranked players.

Whiley will now prepare for the next Super Series event on the Uniqlo Wheelchair Tennis Tour - the South African Open - which takes place in early April.

Heathens return to Monmore

CRADLEY boss Will Pottinger is relishing the prospect of taking the team back to Wolverhampton for home meetings - starting next Monday against Belle Vue.

The Heathens have a long unbeaten record at Monmore and the switch back there from Perry Barr has been welcomed by fans and riders alike.

A bumper crowd is expected for the opener which sees the return of Matt Williamson in Belle Vue colours after he quit Cradley in the winter to join up with his local club.

Said Pottinger: "It goes without saying that being at Monmore Green once again is a boost for the club."

"Everyone just seems to feel a bit more at home with that as our home track, and in previous years we've created a great home track advantage there."

"We've still got a long-standing unbeaten run there which we'll be aiming to continue, and although we had a decent record at Perry Barr last year, having the level of home advantage that Monmore offers is a real positive from our point of view."

"We'll be hoping to take advantage of that and get some big home wins to boost our confidence and hopefully pick up maximum points from our home meetings."

Heathens bosses have also revealed the club's new race jacket design for the 2016 with a nod to the past. The Heathen head and hammer are reunited in a red circle with sponsors logos.

Club Director Nigel Pearson said: "It's never easy combining so many commercial partners with the club logo in a limited space, but we feel we've achieved it quite well."

"Our fans love the history of the club but we also have to promote the younger element of support and that's something we will continue to do."

Swimming club in action at home pool

HALESOWEN swimmers were swimming at their home pool for the second round of the Worcester Winter League.

Worcester and Stourbridge fought for top spot, eventually tying for first place. Final scores were Worcester A 189, Stourbridge A 189, Halesowen 156, Droitwich 107, Orion 100, Oldbury 92.

Individual event winners from Halesowen Swimming Club were James Cuthbert in the boys 15 years and under 100m freestyle, Mark Laing in the men's open 100m backstroke and Jack Simpson in the men's open 100m freestyle. The open 6x1 mixed freestyle relay team also grabbed a first place in the last race.

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketter, Telford, Thursday, March 24, 2016

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CHRONICLE



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END OF THE RAINBOW

LISA MAXWELL AS JUDY GARLAND



BY PETER QUILTER
WITH GARY WILMOT AND SAM ATTWATER

SAT 23 APRIL

AN EVENING WITH DES O'CONNOR



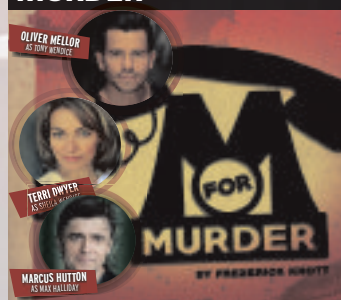
SUNDAY 24 APRIL

THE SOLID SILVER 60'S SHOW



TUES 26 – SAT 30 APRIL

DIAL M FOR MURDER



MON 9 MAY

GLUCK: IPHIGÉNIE EN TAURIDE



ENGLISH TOURING OPERA
SPRING 2016 SEASON

TUES 10 MAY

MOZART: DON GIOVANNI

WED 11 MAY

A CELEBRATION OF JOHN DENVER



TUES 24 – SAT 28 MAY

MADE IN DAGENHAM – THE MUSICAL



TUES 31 MAY

WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN



SUN 5 JUNE

CLARE TEAL & GUY BARKER



WED 8 JUNE

MUSIC HALL MEMORIES



FRI 10 – SAT 11 JUNE

NORTHERN BALLET'S JANE EYRE



TUES 28 JUNE – SAT 2 JULY

SWAP! A HILARIOUS NEW COMEDY



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TUES 5 – SAT 9 JULY

HEARTBEAT



SAT 10 SEPTEMBER

**A SPECTACULAR GALA
NIGHT AT THE GRAND**



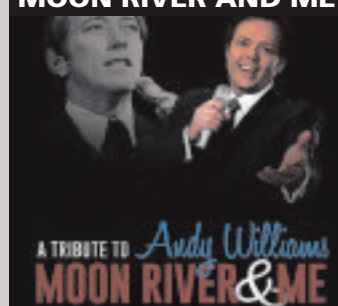
SAT 24 SEPTEMBER

**AN INTIMATE EVENING
WITH JUSTIN HAYWARD**



MON 26 SEPTEMBER

**JIMMY OSMOND:
MOON RIVER AND ME**



TUES 27 SEPT – SAT 1 OCT

**THE SHAWSHANK
REDEMPTION**



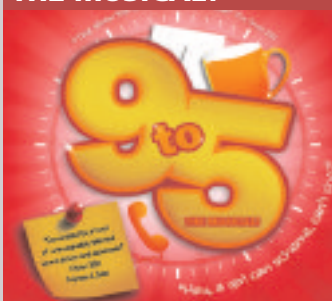
TUES 4 – SAT 8 OCTOBER

**THE SOUND OF
MUSIC**



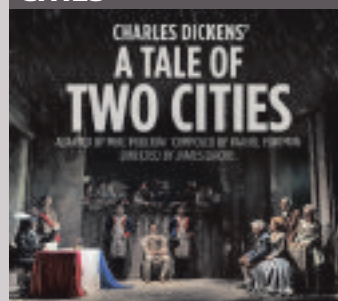
TUES 11 – SAT 15 OCTOBER

**9 TO 5
THE MUSICAL!**



TUES 18 – SAT 22 OCTOBER

**A TALE OF TWO
CITIES**



THURS 10 NOVEMBER

**TONY
CHRISTIE**



TUES 15 – SAT 19 NOVEMBER

OUR HOUSE



FRIDAY 25 NOVEMBER

PSYCHIC SALLY




MON 28 NOV – SAT 3 DEC

DIRTY DANCING



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JOE MCELDERRY
DONS THE COVETED COAT!**

TUESDAY 17 – SATURDAY 21 MAY

RICHARD O'BRIEN'S

ROCKY HORROR Show

MON 13 - SAT 18 JUN

★★★★★

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